PREMILLENNIALISTS RIGHT?

AMUEL HENRY KELLOGG

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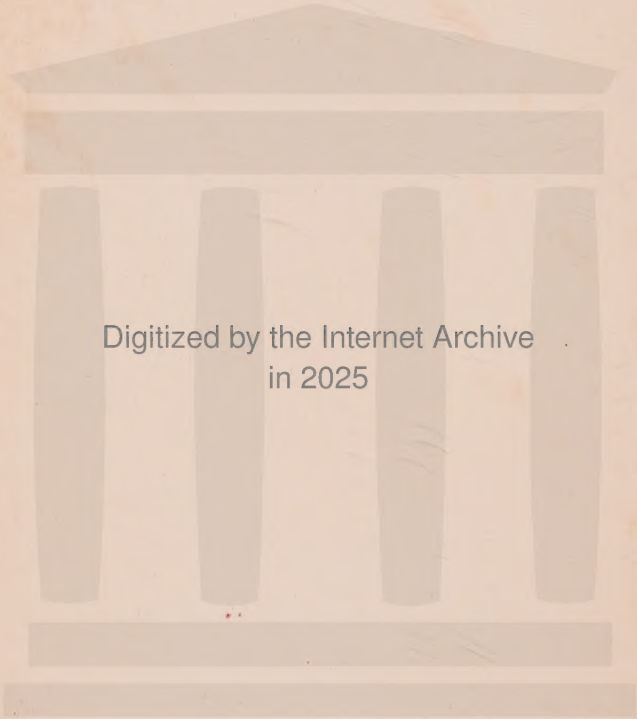

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SAMUEL HENRY KELLOGG

Are Premillennialists Right?

Dallas Theological Seminary Library

By

SAMUEL HENRY KELLOGG, D.D., LL.D.

Sometime Professor of Systematic Theology in Western Theological Seminary, and for Seventeen Years Missionary to India

NEW EDITION

With Biographical Memoir by the Rev
J. J. Lucas, D. D., of India,
and
A Foreword and Supplementary Notes
by Henry S. Nesbitt, of India.

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REV. SAMUEL HENRY KELLOGG, D. D.
1839–1899

A BIOGRAPHICAL MEMOIR

By one of his fellow-missionaries, Rev. J. J. Lucas, D. D., of Allahabad; for fifty-two years a missionary to India.

FOR seventeen years, Dr. Samuel Henry Kellogg was a missionary of the American Presbyterian Mission in North India, the last six years of his life on earth being spent largely at Landour, in the translation of the Old Testament Scriptures into Hindi. When a student at Princeton, he was led by the study of the Bible to believe that the Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ in His glorified human nature is the "Blessed Hope" of the Church. It was this conviction that led him on his graduation in 1864 to come out to India as a missionary to have a part in hastening that day.

Rev. W. J. P. Morrison, one of his classmates who delivered the address at the Memorial Service in Landour after Dr. Kellogg had left us, said that of the hundred members in the class of 1861 at Princeton University, there were two who

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easily took first place in scholarship, mental power and character. One of these was Samuel H. Kellogg, the other his friend, Samuel S. Mitchell.

In India as at home, Dr. Kellogg's outstanding qualities of mind and soul were soon recognized. He quickly showed marked ability as a linguist, and later prepared and published a large Grammar of the Hindi language which is still in demand, and recognized as an authority by the Government. He was also an apt teacher, an ardent evangelist and preacher, and as a friend and companion was irreplaceable. Dr. C. A. R. Janvier, Principal of Ewing Christian College, says of him, "The first thing, perhaps, that would strike one about Dr. Kellogg was the versatility of his genius: he could turn his hand easily to almost anything—could preach a sermon or take a photograph, deliver a lecture or prescribe medicine, teach theology or steer a ship! He was informed on almost every conceivable subject, and could talk intelligently on the most technical topics. It was this in part that made him so brilliant a conversationalist, and secured the wonderful richness of illustration which was so marked a feature of his sermons. But unlike most versatile men, he was as thorough and accurate as he was versatile. He was never superficial. His careful observation, quick apprehension, and remarkable memory combined to make him almost a specialist in every department of work or of recreation which he entered. Another

striking feature of his character was the clearness of his mental vision and his ability to pass on to others what he himself clearly perceived. Yet he was as simple as he was incisive and clear, even when the profound subjects he often presented seemed to forbid simplicity. He was never overbearing, never ostentatious. But the greatest thing about him was his wonderful knowledge of and love for his Bible. He was a man of the Book. His insight into its meaning was phenomenal, and his ability to present its truths to others was such as few men attain. He mastered principles and details alike in Bible study, but this was not simply an intellectual mastery: he was clearly taught of the Holy Spirit. God's truth and God's Spirit stirred his deepest emotions, and many a heart has thrilled, as he set forth in his simple, quiet way, the deep things of God."

Dr. Janvier's allusion to Dr. Kellogg's versatility recalls an episode of his first voyage to India. Three days out from Boston, the ship's captain was washed overboard and lost in a storm. The mate proved to be an incompetent navigator, as well as brutal in his treatment of the crew. The latter organized a mutiny to seize the ship and turn back. At this crisis it became known that the young missionary was well versed in astronomy and navigation. He was asked to assume charge of the charts and instruments and direct the course, which he continued to do for one hundred and

forty-five days, until the ship was brought without mishap to Ceylon.

After twelve years in India, owing to the death of Mrs. Kellogg he was compelled to stay some years in America. During this time he successively filled a pastorate in Pittsburgh; the chair of Systematic Theology in Allegheny (Western) Seminary; and the pastorate for six years of St. James Square Presbyterian Church, Toronto. At the close of that period he was regretfully released to accept an urgent call back to India, there to be one of three scholars to retranslate the Old Testament into Hindi. The following five years and more were among the richest and most fruitful of his life. So highly did his colleagues regard his knowledge of the Bible and Indic philology that after his death they asked for no successor, but this is what they say of their custom: "When we differ between ourselves, and we recall what would have been Dr. Kellogg's view, the one whose opinion differs from this gives way at once."

As I rode up the hill to his funeral I said to Col. Strahan, "How well Dr. Kellogg knew his Bible!" My friend replied, "How well he knew everything!" That is what we who knew him best would say of him. Our hearts often burned within us, as he opened the Scriptures. Their words, Hebrew, Greek, and English were hid in his heart, and in a moment they were on his tongue,

and made to speak their message of life and hope and peace. He was united by faith with those through whom God spoke the Word. Those words were the very bread of life to him. They taught him that the return of the Lord Jesus Christ is the Blessed Hope of the Church, and to hasten the coming of that glorious day, Samuel Kellogg gave up gladly the open doors to positions of wealth and honour in America, and came to India as a missionary. The preaching of the Gospel to the uttermost parts of the earth would hasten that day. Hence he came.

His friends have placed over his grave at Landour a memorial tablet on which they have inscribed the precious words, "Till He Come." Near by stands a spacious house of worship dedicated to his memory. Here on the Himalayan mountain top, amidst the grandeur of God's mighty works which testify to an omnipotent Creator, "able to keep that committed to Him"; and facing the heights of eternal snows that speak of heaven's purity and the unchanging holiness of God, sleeps the dust of our dear friend and brother, until that glorious hour shall come of which he spoke so much and truly, his Lord's return, "until the day break, and the shadows flee away."

J. J. L.

Allahabad, India.

THE WORKS OF

Rev. Dr. S. H. Kellogg

Hodder and Stoughton

The Book of Leviticus, Expositor's Bible.

The Past, a Prophecy of the Future. *Sermons of his American Pastorate.*

The Genesis and Growth of Religion.

The Light of Asia and the Light of the World.

Randolph and Company

The Jews; or Prediction and Fulfilment.

From Death to Resurrection.

Westminster Press

A Handbook of Comparative Religion.

Trübner and Company

A Grammar of the Hindi Language.

Fleming H. Revell Company

Are Premillennialists Right?

Foreword

LEST the title of this book be misunderstood, let it be said that its author was concerned only with the question, "Will Christ's second coming be premillennial?" He is not here attempting to justify or prove all that any one who holds this view may have connected with it. His only purpose in this treatise was to exhibit the weighty reasons that led him throughout his ministry to adhere to this view. Of the forcefulness of those reasons, the reader is asked to judge after an unprejudiced reading of the pages that follow.

Many who entertain a like precious faith with that of the author have long desired to see this small work reprinted. This is happily now possible. It goes forth little changed save for chapter divisions and a few minor foot-notes that seemed to be called for, and which are shown as additions. The book, of course, lays no claim to being a complete or exhaustive presentation of all that might be said on this side of the subject. Were the author among us to-day, we can but conclude that it would have been much more complete, for his other writings contain much additional matter that would be in place here, and the

course of the world's history has only strengthened his position. But it has been thought best to keep it within small compass that it may be quickly examined.

The arguments of Rev. Dr. Brown which are discussed incidentally in Chapters IV and V and fully in Chapter VI, were first published before the middle of the last century in " The Second Advent." This book for a long time was considered to be the best refutation of the premillennial view ever attempted. Many postmillennialists will still allow it to be one of the best books against our view. There is therefore nothing unseasonable in republishing Dr. Kellogg's replies to Dr. Brown, since the latter's arguments are still much employed.

It must be remarked, however, that most recent attempts to prove the hope of Christ's premillennial return to earth to be baseless and visionary have proceeded on the assumption that the Bible is not the final authority or infallible, and that the Lord and His apostles were misled into inculcating such a hope through Jewish apocalypticism. Not a few modern opponents of the belief in an imminent and personal return of Christ declare that were they persuaded that the Bible is indeed the very Word of God, then the premillennialists' conclusion would be unescapable. A well-known theologian, author and church leader who has written a severe arraignment of the view

advocated in the present volume, finds two "errors" existing in the churches of to-day. The first is belief in an inspired Bible,—the second, the teaching of a premillennial advent. He seems to think the second proceeds from the first. Perhaps in this conclusion he is right. We think he is. He misses entirely, however, the great unsettling influence in modern Christianity. It is the Modernism and its denial of God's Word which he and others of his school so ardently promote. We would think our postmillennial brethren would find it disturbing to their minds when they realize their attitude toward premillennial doctrine has much in common with the Modernists' attitude to it. If we mistake not they agree that the premillennial view is harmful to the Church. Let it be pointed out to these brethren, with no lack of love but in recognition of the great issues involved, that their treatment of Scripture also has this in common with that of the radicals and Modernists, —it winks at the plainest meaning of many passages and allegorizes them *ad libitum*. In the face of such plain and unequivocal revelations as those that predict the Jewish restoration, such as abound in the prophecies of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and the other prophets, and particularly in Romans 11, we have heard learned professors of theology who while they declared they believed the Bible inspired, assert with utmost dogmatism that Israel will never be reconstituted as a nation, nor Jeru-

salem become the city of the great King. Indeed this is one of the most positive assertions made in the book of Dr. Brown above referred to. Post-millennialists in making such assertions have virtually declared that there is an end to all positive meaning of human language. And they have moreover laid the foundation of that type of criticism which eventuates in the Modernism of the present day. This is not said to hurt these brethren whom we love, but to arouse them to entirely review the grounds on which they hold their present view.

The four decades that have passed since this book first appeared have served to emphasize the importance of the subject which it treats, and have also given some striking confirmations of the correctness of its main position. We are just now in the days of an apostasy from the orthodox Christianity of the New Testament such as no previous century of our era has witnessed. Many popular preachers and teachers of theology, as well as church leaders and editors of religious periodicals are leading the movement away from the historic faith of the Church. They declare that the times call for a new emphasis in Christianity. As to what this emphasis should be, they do not agree, except to say that it must not admit the miraculous, nor human depravity. Those who maintain these things must mean either that true Christians in the past have failed to understand

what it was that Christ and His apostles emphasized, or else that our age is too intellectual, scientific and progressive to believe in a Gospel and a Bible which imply an infallible revelation, a supernatural creation by the fiat of the Almighty, the eternal preëxistence, supernatural birth, substitutionary death and bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ, as well as His coming again in the clouds of heaven. If indeed the reader doubt the prevalence of the denial of these basic truths of our most holy faith by men calling themselves Christians and in prominent places of influence of the various denominations, let him but read the current issues of a few of the more popular religious weeklies. And these conditions, so far from showing a tendency to abate, appear to be but in their inception. The advocates of these views in numerous schools of theology are training young men to go out and preach them to their generation. And they declare their intention to persist in the dissemination of their doctrines till all the churches are delivered from bondage to worn-out creeds, confidence in an infallible Book, which they term "bibliolatry," belief in human depravity, the atoning blood of Calvary, childish belief in miracles and an outgrown cosmogony.

At a time when the Word of God is so much discredited, it may seem to some futile to republish a book whose chief arguments are based on an inerrant revelation, the Bible. But that Dr.

Kellogg was "a workman needing not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth" is abundantly testified by a reading of the present work, and also his other books, particularly, "The Jews; or Prediction and Fulfilment." He was an able minister of the new covenant and well versed in every branch of sacred learning, whether the original languages of Scripture, Systematic Theology, Exegesis or pulpit ministration. His surviving friends as well as his published sermons witness to the peculiar profit that attended his discussion of such themes as the unfolding of prophecy, the mysteries and glories of the end of time and the age to come, the sublime realities of the resurrection life, and the completed and attained redemption of the believer in Christ. He is surely an unusual student of prophecy, whose conclusions are found after forty years to be consistent with the course of events. Let the reader peruse the author's book, "The Jews," and he will discover that it is still a most valuable and timely discussion of Jewish history, past, present and future. This can be explained only on the ground of its harmony with the Word of God, for prophecy is the mould of history.

To-day we are more than five years past the time of Jerusalem's deliverance from the age-long treading-down of the Gentile Moslem, the successor in 637 A. D. of her earlier Roman conquerors. The first Israelitish governor for nearly two

thousand years now administers the government of Palestine; we are witnessing the preparation for and beginning of a rehabilitation of the land that promises to eclipse what the most sanguine minds have dared to expect; thousands of Jews are yearly turning their footsteps toward their patriarchal land,—thirty thousand of them in the last two and a half years, in the hope that there at last their persecutions, wanderings and exile shall end; while large sums of money are being given by poor and rich alike to fit Palestine to be their national home. He must be indeed a superficial student both of the prophecies of the Bible and passing events as well, upon whom such things make no deep impression.

Yet with all these potent signs of the budding of the fig tree, we have to confess that in the non-Jewish world, the former age of tranquillity is gone. Instead we find ourselves in what may truly be termed "perilous times." The greatest war in human history has left the world crippled and bankrupt, but far worse—it has gendered racial problems and animosities of unexampled magnitude, so that it is no exaggeration to say, if we may judge from the public utterances of leading statesmen, that now "men's hearts are failing them for fear, and from looking after those things which are coming upon the earth." And withal the "love of many waxes cold." Great rifts and breaches are threatening in the largest evangelical

churches of Christendom, by reason of the wedge being driven into them by sceptical Modernists, many of them ensconced in lucrative vantage points in endowed seminaries and pulpits of wealthy churches. Another sinister sign of our day is the almost total domination of education by the pseudo-scientific hypothesis of evolution, accepted without reserve by most leading educators, who profess pity for the weak mentality of those who refuse to accept it instead of the Bible's revealed account of Creation.

Still more ominous is the state of many schools of theology, that were not many years ago the very nurseries of orthodox faith. In spite of the terrible demonstration the Great War gave to the swift retribution an all-wise Providence sends upon those who repudiate God's Book, as Germany was the first to do; in spite of the displeasure Heaven then visited upon the traducers of Christ's Godhead and atonement,—our theologians, with some grand and worthy exceptions, seem striving to outdo Germany's most radical teachers of a generation ago. If Germany's war policy was dictated by her philosophers, and her philosophy was built upon her theology, what harvest may we expect in England and America from the present mad course of scepticism and unbelief being fostered by the very institutions of learning that were founded by godly men and women to preserve the faith of the Church from these particular errors?

Such conditions must surely recall to sober believing minds the apostle's words, "The Spirit speaketh expressly that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith"; and again, "That day shall not come, except there come a falling away first."

The Great War had barely ceased, when there spread over the entire earth the most universally destructive plague ever recorded in human annals. If our Lord warned us that plagues and wars should constitute a sign of the approach of the day of His return, then surely the greatest war and the greatest plague in human history are matters about which we can afford to think very seriously. The Gospel we see penetrating all lands, except those which have wilfully excluded it, or others which like Turkey after many years of opportunity have rejected it.

Dr. Moule, late Bishop of Durham, in a pastoral letter to the clergy of his diocese some years ago, reminded them of another particular in which this age resembles the time in which our Lord said He would return. Many are now finding it impossible to think that this age should draw to a close when so many problems await human attention,—thus fulfilling that other condition, "At such a time as ye think not." And he adds, "The Second Advent, veritable, personal, as much an actual event as the first,—is an event which must happen sometime and may happen any time. This august theme

is profitable for instruction in righteousness, and also for the revival of that hope which not only is in harmony with patient continuance in well-doing, but is the soul of it."

All such considerations and many more that are constantly brought to mind by the Scriptures must make sober-minded Christians pause and think, and then "watch and pray." Few such persons will refuse the time necessary to give this small book a careful and open-minded reading. And it is confidently believed that as God has been pleased to use it hitherto to bless many with a clearer view of the truth, so He will again. With this hope and prayer it is sent forth.

HENRY S. NESBITT,
Missionary to India for eighteen years.

New Concord, Ohio.

[The reader who may desire to study the subject of the Lord's Coming beyond the limits of the following discussion, will find it treated more fully by the author in his volume of sermons, "The Past, a Prophecy of the Future," the perusal of which will be found very helpful and stimulating to Christian faith. It can be obtained at The Presbyterian Book Store, Granite Building, Pittsburgh, Pa., for $1.75.]

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I

THE WITNESS OF THE EARLY CHURCH

The Coming Age of Righteousness or Millennium—The Two Views Stated—The Apostolic and Post-Apostolic Ages Unacquainted with the Popular Modern View of the Millennium.

IT is agreed by the most of Christians that the Word of God predicts an age of universal righteousness and peace as yet to dawn upon the earth. The present dominance of sin and error shall end. Holiness and truth shall everywhere prevail. To give all the Scriptures which teach this, would be to cite a large part of the Old and New Testaments.[1] Because this blessed period has been by many expositors identified with the thousand years of the binding of Satan, of which we read in Revelation 20: 2, 3, it has come to be popularly known as "the Millennium." We shall, therefore, use this familiar term for the sake of convenience in the present discussion, though without meaning thereby to insist upon that interpretation of Revelation 20 which has given rise to

[1] See, *e. g.*, Ps. 2:8; 22:27; 72:8-9; Is. 11:1-9; 60; 65:16-25; Dan. 7:27; Hab. 2:14; Zech. 14:9, 20, 21; the second and third petitions of the Lord's Prayer, and Rev. 11:15.

this employment of the word; for, however that one passage be interpreted, the fact will still remain that the Scriptures predict such an age of universal righteousness—an age which certainly the world has never seen. This is so very clear as to have commended the general assent of the Church.

So also, with like unanimity, all evangelical Protestant Christians, as also the Romish and Oriental Churches, in all the great historical creeds, profess to believe that, according to the same sure word of prophecy, at some time in the future the Lord Jesus Christ will return to this earth in kingly majesty as Judge of the living and the dead.

While there is this general agreement that these two events—the subjugation of the world to Christ, and His future personal second Advent—are certainly predicted in the Scriptures, there is, on the other hand, much dispute as to *the order of succession* in which these two events shall take place. Some—the majority in this age and especially in this country—maintain that the conversion of the world and the following age of universal righteousness shall precede the personal Advent of Christ; others, that the personal Advent shall precede and introduce the so-called Millennial age. Those who hold the former opinion are commonly known as Postmillennialists; those who maintain the latter, as Premillennialists. Postmillennialists seem to agree in expecting something

like the following order of events: The Gospel is to be preached among all nations, and will at last be accompanied by such unprecedented outpourings of the Holy Spirit that the whole world shall in some sense be converted to Christ. Instead of vice and error, as now, true religion will everywhere be in the ascendant. After a long time, however,—often supposed from Revelation 20 to be a thousand years, there will be, it is believed, a great apostasy and a short season of awful wickedness, to be ended by the personal appearing of the Lord Jesus to make an immediate, complete, and everlasting end of the present earthly order, raising and judging together the righteous and the wicked.

As contrasted with this, Premillennialists insist that this view reverses the Scriptural order, and is inconsistent with revealed facts. Their belief is as follows. Agreeing that the Scriptures warrant the expectation of a future age of triumphant righteousness upon the earth, they maintain that the second Advent will not follow, but *introduce,* that period, and that until that time, not "the *wheat*" merely, but "the *tares*" also, "the children of the wicked one," must continue to grow.[1] They, therefore, expect no universal triumph of holiness till Christ returns. Which of these two is the Scriptural doctrine as to the order of events? Does the Millennium bring in Christ, or does

[1] See Matt. 13: 30.

Christ, by His personal return, bring in the Millennium?

This is the simple question fundamental to this whole discussion. To this all others are secondary and subordinate. This question should not, as often, be confounded with other and mistaken or irrelevant issues. The question is not, for example, whether Christ shall visibly return to this earth. That is agreed on both sides. It is not whether the Holy Spirit has the power, with present instrumentalities, to convert the whole world before and apart from the visible appearance of Christ. That, again, is agreed on both sides. The question is not as to what God *can* do, but as to what He has revealed that He *intends* to do. Neither is the question whether man, in that future age of righteousness, will be saved in any other way than by the regeneration of the Spirit and faith in an atoning Saviour. Both sides heartily agree that in all dispensations there has been, and ever will be, but one way of salvation. The question, again, is not as to the duty of preaching the Gospel among all nations, nor the certainty that this will be done before the Lord's return. Both parties agree on both these points. Premillenarians, no less than others, are found in the forefront of the home and foreign evangelism of the day. The difference of understanding is not as to these points, but as to the divine *purpose* in this universal preaching. Neither is it the question whether this preach-

ing shall be successful or not. Both sides agree that it *must* be successful for all that God intends to accomplish by it. Both, moreover, believe that it is the purpose of God to gather out of the world in the present age, by means of this preaching, "an exceeding great multitude which no man can number."[1] The question, we repeat, is simply this: Whether the universal triumph of Christ's kingdom, which the prophets predict in such glowing terms, is to be expected *before* Christ's personal Advent, or only *after* it. That the latter, and not the former, is the teaching of the Scriptures, we believe, for reasons that we now give.

First—Because the former or Postmillennial view is a modern opinion, while the latter or Premillennial view is the primitive doctrine. The now fashionable theory of a Millennium of prevailing righteousness on earth before the second Advent is a *novelty*, unknown to the Church before the Reformation. On the other hand, Premillennialism was the general faith of the Church in the age immediately succeeding the apostles. The warrant for this statement is briefly set forth in the following extract from an article by the present writer in the "Schaff-Herzog Encyclopædia."[2]

[1] There is the more need to notice these affirmations, that as regards every point named, Premillennialists are often charged with holding views which they, in the persons of all their representative men, utterly repudiate.

[2] Op. cit., vol. iii., Article, "Premillennialism." First edition.

"It is commonly agreed by the best modern historians that from the death of the apostles till the time of Origen, Premillennialism was the general faith of those who were regarded as strictly orthodox Christians. If it had some elements in common with the Jewish Chiliasm,[1] yet, 'so far from being derivable from it, it may in part be more justly regarded as a polemic against Judaism.' (Dorner: *Doctrine of the Person of Christ,* division i., vol. i., 408.) It was already received by Gentile Christians before the close of the first century (Herzog: *Real-Encyk.,* art. 'Chiliasmus'), and 'was expressly rejected during the first half of the second century, only by most Gnostics' (Nitzsch: *Dogm. Gesch.,* 401). The doctrine is found in the epistle of Barnabas (chap. 45), the Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs (Jud. 25, Benj. 10), the Shepherd of Hermas (Vis. 1, 3); was taught by Papias (Eusebius: *Ecclesiastical History,* iii., 39; is set forth by Justin the Martyr (*Dial.,* 80, 81); still more fully by Irenæus (*Adv. Hær.,* 23, 25–36), and Tertullian (*Adv. Marc.,* lib. iv., 24).[2] The first re-

[1] "Chiliasm"—"Premillennialism."

[2] Our opponents generally are constrained to admit this extensive prevalence of Premillennialism in the primitive Church. Thus, Dr. A. A. Hodge says: "It prevailed generally throughout the Church from A. D. 150 to A. D. 250." Quite true; but can he name a writer before 150 A. D., who teaches the doctrine which he advocates, or anything opposed to Premillennialism?

corded opponent of the doctrine was Caius, a presbyter of Rome, about the beginning of the third century, from which time, through the opposition of the Montanists, who made Chiliasm a prominent article of their faith, the dislike to the gross form in which some individuals presented the doctrine, and, still more, through the influence of Origen and the Alexandrian allegorizing school of interpretation, Chiliasm rapidly declined. In the third and the early part of the fourth century, however, some eminent men, as, *e. g.*, Nepos, Cyprian, Methodius, and Lactantius (*Inst.*, vii., *et seq.*) held the doctrine; but when, in Constantine, Christianity reached the throne of the Roman Empire, the Church soon settled in the belief, shortly afterward confirmed by the weighty authority of Augustine, that the Millennial reign, formerly expected to begin with the second Advent, was really to be reckoned from the first, and was therefore a realized fact in the triumph of the Church over the heathen state.[1] That doctrine, with unessential modifications, remained the universal faith of the

[1] Later writers dated the Millennium from Constantine. But this form of Postmillennialism, in any of its varieties, must not be confounded with the theory now most popular in America, which makes the Millennium still future, to begin and run its course before the Advent. This theory, first successfully advocated by Mr. Whitby—circ. 1730,—cannot be traced beyond the Reformation. Dr. A. A. Hodge apparently confounds it with the Augustinian theory when he says that "it has been generally recognized by the whole Church" since 250 A. D. (*Outlines of Theology*, p. 589).

Church for a full thousand years, during which Premillennialism can hardly be said to have existed. With the Reformation of the sixteenth century, shortly reappeared the ancient chiliastic hopes."

To the list of ancient authorities given in the above extract must be added the now recovered work, "The Teaching of the Apostles," once and again referred to by the early fathers as a valuable manual for Christian instruction. This book, which appears to have been intended as a brief summary of Christian doctrine for popular use, written probably between 120 and 160 A. D., clearly implies a belief in the Advent as Premillennial, in that, like all Premillennialists, the writer knows only of a resurrection of the *righteous* at the advent of the Lord. It tells us that in the days of the Anti-Christ, "the heavens will open, the trumpet will sound, and then shall be a resurrection of the dead—*not,* however, *of all,* but as it is written, the Lord shall come and *all his saints* with him."

While we have such abundant testimony to the belief in the Premillennial Advent in the Church immediately after the apostles, we find in no writer of that age anything which teaches the contradictory doctrine as above set forth. *None* of the prevailing views, *except* Premillennialism, can be historically traced in the Church to a date nearer the apostles than about 200 A. D.

Of course, these writers of the primitive Church

were not infallible. It is *conceivable* that the whole Church, which had the advantage of being instructed by the apostles and their immediate disciples, *may* have misunderstood them on this subject. But when we remember the prominence which the doctrine of the Advent and the kingdom had in the apostolic teaching, as preserved for us in the New Testament, can we justly say that this was likely? These facts as to the belief of the primitive Church establish, then, at least a strong *presumption* that the doctrine of a Premillennial Advent was a part of "the faith once delivered by the apostles to the saints," and that the contrary view is therefore not according to apostolic teaching.

But this is not, of course, decisive. It is written; "To the law and to the testimony! if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no truth in them." What, then, is the Scripture testimony?

II

THE WITNESS OF SCRIPTURE

Postmillennial View without Scriptural Proof—Christ and His Apostles Mention no World-Conversion Before His Return, but do Foretell an Apostasy and an Evil Age—The Parable of the Leaven—Israel's Conversion—Motives to World Evangelization.

WE now wish to inquire,—what light do the Scriptures give on this question? In the first place, and, negatively, we cannot find in the Bible a single declaration that the predicted age of Gospel triumph will come *before* the advent. The assertion of this doctrine rests, at the best, only on human inference from the Scriptures, and on no direct teaching of the word to that effect. Silence is not always proof; but in this case the silence of the Scripture affords a very weighty presumption against the truth of the doctrine in question. Those who affirm the doctrine of a Millennium before the Advent, very properly, if they are in the right, make much of it. It is not a truth which they think ought to be kept in the background. Few doctrines are made more prominent than this. It is asserted to be of very great practical consequence in its bearing upon missionary work, as, indeed, if true, it is. If true, there-

fore, it is not a matter on which we should expect the Scripture to keep silence, or leave all to uncertain human inference. Yet where in all the New Testament is there a single clear declaration to the effect that centuries of truly Christian national and social life must roll over the earth before the Lord's return can be rightfully expected?

The omission is the more significant that the Lord does not seem to have been at all unwilling to indicate, in answer to the questioning of His disciples, what they were to expect before His second coming. Once and again He tells them what they were to look for before His return, but among such events He never mentions the conversion of the world. In the 24th of Matthew's Gospel and the parallel passages we have a long discourse formally intended to set forth the nature and order of the events which from that time on should occur before His coming, but among these there is not so much as an allusion to a coming age of Millennial holiness. He tells us, indeed, that "this Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations," but instead of adding that, as the result of this, a blessed age of righteousness would follow, He simply says, "then shall the end come."[1] If the Lord Jesus knew that the glorious predic-

[1] Prof. Van Oosterzee remarks that the addition of these words "for a witness" "points not indistinctly to a hostile resistance. That all nations must, as nations, have accepted

tions of the Old Testament prophets about the full subjection of the world to Him were all to be fulfilled before He could come again, how passing strange it is that He should not have alluded to this inspiring truth in a discourse delivered *for the express purpose* of teaching the Church what she was to expect before the Advent!

And what is true of the Master is true also of the disciples. Paul, at a later day, had occasion to take up this same question of the necessary antecedents of the Advent. But neither does he suggest, even when formally treating of the subject, that a Millennium was to be expected before the Thessalonians could rightfully expect the appearing of the Lord. On the contrary, the *only* necessary antecedent which he mentions is the development of then existing evil into full-grown apostasy and the consequent revelation of "the Man of Sin."[1] No more does Peter seem to know of this doctrine than Paul. He had occasion to state the purpose of the present preaching of the Gospel to the heathen, but he did not say that it was to convert the nations, but simply "to take out of the Gentiles a people for his name."[2] Is that the way in which we are wont to hear the

of this Gospel and been brought into the outward Church before the Lord comes in glory, is by no means taught in these words." ("Image of Christ," p. 452. See also in his "Christian Dogmatics," sec. cxlv., pp. 705–6.)

[1] 2 Thess. 2:3. [2] Acts 15:14.

object of missions stated in our missionary journals and conventions? We have known a man to be inferred to be a Premillenarian for simply using Peter's words on this subject. Nor does John give different testimony. He has little to say of the last times as such, but he never drops a word which could lead one to suspect that he expected as their grand characteristic a general triumph of the Gospel before the coming of the Lord. An "antichrist" he expected,[1] but as to any world-conversion he is as silent as the rest.

Nor is all this because none of these speak of the distant future, but only of the dark future near to their own time. Both Paul and Peter formally state what shall be the character of the times more immediately before the Advent, and they both represent them as not good, but evil days, for the Church and the world. Peter tells us, 2 Peter 3: 1–5, that the last days shall be marked by a denial of the doctrine of the coming of the Lord to judgment, based upon an affirmation of the uniformity of the laws of nature and a wilful ignoring of the evidence that the world was created by the fiat of a personal God. Paul, 2 Timothy 3: 1–5, gives a picture differing from that of Peter in that he is apparently portraying the condition of the visible Church, while Peter describes that of the world; but a Millennium is no more intimated in the one case than in the

[1] 1 John 2: 18.

other. "A form of godliness" without its "power" suggests something very different from the Old Testament pictures of the triumph of Christ's Kingdom.

To sum up, then, Premillennialists claim to be able to point out many passages in which an age of righteousness and holiness on earth is represented as *following* the Advent of the Lord. Many of these are so clear that most on both sides agree that such a succession is taught in the Scriptures. We ask those who insist that a Millennium must yet occur *before* the Advent, to point out *one* equally clear passage wherein the coming of the Lord is represented as *introduced* or *preceded* by a long and blessed reign of righteousness in a converted world. A Biblical statement to this effect has been often asked for, but to this day, so far as we know, it has never been given.

But it is replied that certain passages of Scripture do at least warrant the *inference* that a full triumph of the Gospel is to be expected before the Coming of the Lord. Among these Scriptures we may note, first of all, the parable of the leaven in Matthew 13: 33. But even granting—what some expositors of ability deny—that this parable does teach us that the kingdom of God shall work as an inward transforming power, and that at last all the world shall be subject to its blessed influence, surely this involves no teaching one way or the other as to the precise point before us. For the

question is *not* as to the transforming power of the Gospel, nor as to its final triumph, but as to *when*, and *under what conditions*, the final triumph shall be reached, whether before or after, with or without a personal Advent of the Lord in His judicial power. On this matter the parable is absolutely silent, and affords no justification for the conclusion which some have drawn from it.

It is indeed urged that the illustration of a gradual permeation, as by leaven, *excludes* the idea that the final supremacy of the Gospel on earth shall be brought about by any such catastrophe as a personal Advent of the Lord in judgment. Plausible as this appears, however, the vision of Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel 2—interpreted by Daniel of the same general subject of the final triumph of the kingdom of God,—should have made some expositors less confident in this conclusion from the parable of the leaven. In that vision also the expansive power of the kingdom of God was represented under the image of growth. A stone grew until it "became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth." Had that been all, one might have argued there as here, that this illustration of *growth* excluded any great catastrophe of judgment as another element in bringing about the final triumph of the heavenly kingdom. But growth was not all. The king, we are told, saw a great image, whose head was of gold, its breast and arms of silver, loins of brass, legs of iron,

feet of iron mingled with clay. This Daniel interprets as representing the successive phases of human political government until the final universal prevalence of the kingdom of Messiah. The judgment which is to destroy the world-power and introduce the kingdom, though not mentioned in the parable of the leaven, is explicitly set forth in this prophetic vision. This image is represented as being smitten by the Stone upon its feet, *i. e.*, according to the interpretation of the prophet, in its latest chronological form. As a consequence of this, it is not transmuted, but annihilated, and not until then is the stone represented as so growing as to fill the whole earth. But if the growth of the stone as representing the kingdom of God did not exclude a great catastrophe of judgment, destroying the political world-power, what right have we to assume that the illustration of the leaven, if it set forth the growth of the kingdom of God, does exclude a similar catastrophe,[1] and

[1] The obvious reason for the omission of this element in this parable is the fact that the judgment is mentioned in other parables of the series, as, *e. g.*, that of "the tares." This parable of the tares alone clearly excludes the doctrine of a Millennium before the Advent. It is written of the tares and the wheat, "Let *both grow together* until the harvest." We heartily accept the following words of Archbishop Trench as to the teaching of these words: "We learn that evil is not, as so many dream, gradually to wane and to disappear before the good, the world before the Church, but is ever to develop itself more fully: even as on the other side, good is to unfold itself more and more mightily also.

necessarily teaches that the predicted triumph of the kingdom must be antecedent to the manifestation of the Lord in judgment?

Indeed, the history of the Church itself is a sufficient evidence that this much-quoted parable was not intended as an exhaustive statement of the causes which should bring about the final supremacy on earth of the kingdom of God. It is only designed—*if* the usual interpretation be assumed—to teach a single aspect of the subject, that from small beginnings the kingdom of God works in the world as an inward, transforming power. That this is true, no one can doubt. But it is equally true that this fact has not thus far excluded many great catastrophes, which have contributed, each in their measure, to bring about at last the predicted end. And if the terms have not in fact excluded, for example, such destructive visitations as the overthrow of Jerusalem and judgment of the Jewish state, how can they certainly exclude what we claim that the Old and New Testament prophets no less clearly predict, a still more terrible judgment of the Gentile world, accompanied by the appearing of the Lord in flaming fire, as the last antecedent to the full subjugation of the world to Christ?[1]

Thus it will go on, till at last they stand face to face, each in its highest manifestation, in the persons of Christ and of Anti-Christ." ("Notes on the Parables," 11th Amer. ed., p. 85; see also p. 90.)

[1] 2 Thess. 1:7–10.

Others, again, argue that the conversion of all nations before the coming of the Lord is clearly implied, if not directly asserted, in the terms of the great commission, as given by Matthew, "Go ye, and make disciples of all the nations." Does not this plainly teach that the nations will be converted, and that by the simple preaching of the Gospel, before the second coming of the Lord? This is, at least, a strange argument to be heard —as it often is—from Calvinists! When we argue against Pelagians, we are accustomed to say that the fact that a command is given is *not* proof that it is either in the ability of man or in the plan of God that what is commanded be actually accomplished. That Christians are commanded to be absolutely perfect is not to be doubted. Shall we, then, on the same principle that is assumed in this interpretation of the great commission, also agree with those who maintain that we may attain sinless perfection in this life? The truth is, that in neither case is the command intended to teach that the end for which we are bidden to strive will be certainly attained. In both cases alike, it is simply intended to set before Christians *the goal* at which the Lord will have them *aim*. Thus, if He commands us to be perfect, He means that He will have us aim at this. In other words, we are not to relax our efforts so long as we come in the least short of a perfect likeness to our heavenly Father. Precisely so in the other case. The scope

of our commission is coextensive with the world. The disciples were not to preach to the Jews alone, but seek to make disciples of the Gentiles also. So long as there is one nation or one family in any nation that is not yet discipled to Christ, so long are we to continue labouring. But that the conversion of the nations, in the full, broad sense of that word, will *not* have been accomplished a thousand years or more before the advent, is suggested, if not indeed clearly taught by the very terms of the promise annexed, to be with us "always,"—of course with special reference to the work commanded—"even unto the end of the age."

According to others, again, the doctrine of the conversion of the world before the advent is taught in Romans 11: 25, where we read that "blindness in part is happened to Israel till the fullness of the Gentiles be come in." These words have been said to teach that "the Gentiles as a body, the mass of the Gentile world, will be converted before the restoration of the Jews as a nation," and, therefore, by necessary consequence, before the appearing of the Lord. This interpretation, be it noted, if lexically *possible,* is not necessitated, as Meyer, *e. g.,* admits,[1] by the meaning of the words. It is only *one* interpretation which the words, as such, will bear. But to this exposition of the passage there are two fatal objections.

[1] See his "Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans," *sub loc. cit.*

In the first place, it makes the world at the time of the conversion of the Jews to be in a converted state, and therefore filled with righteousness; whereas, the Old Testament prophets, whenever they refer to the matter, uniformly represent the state of the Gentile world at the time of Israel's restoration to be, on the contrary, so extremely bad as to call down overwhelming judgments upon all the nations among whom the Jews shall be found scattered. Thus we read in Joel 3 of great judgments as to come on the Gentiles at that time, and the moral condition of the nations at that period is described, not as that of converted peoples, but in the following language: "Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat, for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about; put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe, for *their wickedness is great.*" To the same effect does the prophet Zechariah depict the condition of the Gentile nations (Zech. 14: 1, 2) where he represents the nations at the time of Israel's final restoration as guilty of the most frightful excesses. In a word, nowhere in the Old Testament do the prophets teach us that the Gentiles will be in a converted state at the time of the restoration of Israel, but always, on the contrary, that they will then be visited with terrible judgments because of their sins.

In the second place, whereas, according to the interpretation under discussion, the conversion of

the Gentile nations, as such, precedes the conversion of Israel and is a cause of it, the Old Testament prophets state the reverse order, and make the conversion of Israel to precede the general conversion of the Gentile nations, and to be indeed in some way the cause or occasion of it. Thus, in Jeremiah 4: 1, 2, the dependence of the conversion of the Gentiles upon the turning of Israel to the Lord, as the pre-ordained condition, is expressly asserted thus: "*If thou* wilt return, O Israel, return unto me; and *if thou* wilt put away thy abominations out of thy sight, *then* thou shalt not remove . . . and *the nations shall bless themselves in him* and in him shall they glory." Even the apostle Paul himself in this same eleventh chapter seems to teach the same doctrine, saying: "If the casting away of them was the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them again be but life from the dead?"[1] We are compelled, therefore, to infer that it is not the conversion of the Gentile nations to Christ, that will have the effect of "provoking the Jews to jealousy, so that they may obtain mercy," but the saving of the

[1] See also Zech. 2:8–11; 8:13, 20–23; 14:9, noting the context, especially 12:10, *et seq.*, in all which reference to the restoration from Babylon is utterly excluded. Bengel, in his Gnomon, *loc. cit.*, also makes the conversion of the Gentile nations to follow that of Israel. Is. 59:17 . . . 61:3 *et seq.*, teaches the same order, a passage which Paul formally applies to the national Israel, in verse 26 of this very chapter.

complement to the election out of this present dispensation, prior to Israel's redemption, which will at last contribute to this blessed effect. The words of Paul in this famous passage do not therefore prove that which they are so often quoted to prove.

The passages we have reviewed seem to be regarded as the strongest in their supposed support of the common expectation of the conversion of the world and a Millennial age before the second Advent. Not to review others of less plausibility in minute detail, we repeat, then, that the Scriptures nowhere declare that we are to expect a Millennium of righteousness before the Lord can come, and that the omission to say this, under the circumstances, still further strengthens the presumption that this expectation is not according to the purpose of God, and is therefore foredoomed to disappointment.

The presumption against the doctrine of a conversion of the world before the Advent is made the stronger by the fact that the predicted subjugation of the nations to the Lord is never held up in the New Testament as a motive to the extension of the Gospel. If the conversion of all nations is to be the direct result of our evangelistic efforts, it were certainly most fitting that it should be continually held up as one of the strongest motives to press forward with the work. That this motive is constantly used by those who have this expectation is a fact familiar to every one who has at-

tended a missionary meeting or reads our religious papers. But where is this motive of which we in these days have come to hear so much, once urged by our Lord and His apostles? The first preachers had even more need of this encouragement than we have in these days of peace and quietness and much profession of Christ, yet the Lord never once gave it to them. He set before them many motives and encouragements to faithfulness in the preaching of His Gospel, but the conversion of the world thereby was never one of those motives. The contrast with the modern method of awakening missionary enthusiasm is exceedingly suggestive. How can it be explained, except upon the supposition that the Lord did not expect the whole world to be converted by our preaching in the present dispensation and before His return?

III

THE WITNESS OF SCRIPTURE

The Advent to be Viewed as Always Imminent and Impending—It Will be Unexpected—Duty of Watchfulness—This Forbids the Certainty of a Long Intervening Era—How Dr. Brown and Others Reconcile Imminency and Certain Postponement—The "Long Time"—What Troubled the Thessalonians—This Age.

NOT only are the Scriptures silent as to a Millennial age of holiness before the Advent, under circumstances when, if this were God's truth, they might by all means be expected to speak, but they categorically teach what should utterly forbid any Christian to cherish such an expectation. In the first place, they teach that the time of the Advent is so utterly uncertain that no man has a right to be *sure* that the Advent *may* not, so far as he knows, occur in his day. "Watch, for ye know not when the time is," is the sum of the Lord's teaching on this subject. Not once, but again and again, are we charged that we remember this uncertainty of the time. We are told that when the Lord comes it will be like "a snare," like "the lightning," like "the thief at night." How can such teaching be recon-

ciled with the doctrine that a Millennium must yet begin and end before the Lord can possibly appear? If the conversion of the world and centuries of righteousness were to precede the Advent, then how could the coming of the Lord be thus unexpected to believers, when that long Millennium, the greatest and most indubitable of all signs, should have come and gone? Note how carefully the Lord chooses His words,—so carefully that one would think that this theory of a Millennium which must needs precede His coming could never have found a hearing in the Church! For He said, *expressly including both the near and the distant future* in His language, "Watch ye, for ye know not when the Master of the house cometh—at *even,* or at *midnight,* or at the *cock-crowing,* or in the *morning.*" And, as if this were not enough, He explicitly declares that these words applied alike to those who at that time heard them, and all others. "What I say unto you, I say unto *all,* Watch." Yet men venture to tell us confidently that the Lord will not come till a Millennium shall have come and gone;—in other words, not until the morning watch! What, then, did the Lord mean by such words as the above? It is the fashion of many such interpreters to expatiate, with a severity not undeserved, on the error of another class of prophetic expositors, who from time to time announce the year in which the coming of the Lord may be expected. They justly

charge them with ignoring those plain words of Christ, which tell us that no man knows the time. But is not the rebuke often no less deserved by many who in this rebuke others? Do not the same words which forbid us all to fix any date in the *near* future by which the Lord *must* come, equally forbid us to fix any time in the more *distant* future before which He *cannot* come?

And this brings us to another argument against this doctrine of a Postmillennial Advent. If believed with confidence, it makes it impossible to obey the Lord's command to *watch* for His return.[1] Just at this point the controversy comes to have a practical bearing. While we are none of us required to have a certain theory of prophecy, with all the events of the future mapped out in their order, we *are* required to obey the commandments of the Lord. Of these commands no one is more emphasized than just this, that because the time of His return is so utterly uncertain, we should be ever on the watch for Him. But how can any man obey this particular commandment who really believes with confidence that a thousand years of universally prevailing righteousness

[1] It scarcely need be said that of course this will not *now* be true of those who hold the earlier form of Postmillennialism, and date the beginning of the thousand years from the first Advent, or the conversion of Constantine. The argument, however, holds no less good in principle against this form of Postmillennialism also. No one could watch who believed it till the thousand years had expired.

are yet before the Church this side the second Advent? Surely this command to watch carries with it, by necessary implication, a command to regard the coming of the Lord as always *possibly* at hand. To this effect the words of the Westminster Confession of Faith, in Chapter 33, Section 3, have been rightly interpreted as teaching that "the designed effect of the attitude of uncertainty with regard to the Second Advent in which the saints are placed is, that they should regard it as *always immediately impending.*"[1] How the confident teaching which one often hears as to a Millennium which is coming before the Advent of the Lord can be reconciled with the words of Scripture and the above clear exposition of those words as set forth in the Westminster Confession, we have never yet been able to understand.

But to all this it is rejoined, as by Dr. Brown,[2] for example, that our Lord gave clear intimations of so much that would take place before He would return, that it is plain that He could not have intended that the generation then living should regard His Advent as possible in their day. To this assertion it were enough to reply that our Lord expressly said that the disciples then living did not know but that He might come "in the even," in that earliest watch of the night. It is perfectly

[1] "Commentary on the Confession of Faith," by Professor A. A. Hodge, D. D., p. 536.

[2] In his work on *The Second Advent*, chap. 3 *passim*.

certain that He did not intend any intimation of delay to be so explicit as to neutralize these words. Nor, indeed, is there anything in any prediction of a delay in His appearing to indicate the length of that delay. We read these passages now in the light of eighteen hundred years of history. But the early Church had no experience which could suggest to them such a long interval as we now know to be intimated in these predictions. Is it said, "After a *long time* the Lord of those servants cometh"? True, but the "long time" of the parable was comprehended in the lifetime of a man, and what was there to make them think it must needs be more in the fulfilment than in the parable? Did Christ say that the Gospel should first be published "among all nations"? True again, and *we* see now how much time, through the remissness of the Church, and other reasons, that preaching was to require. But how should the first Christians have known this? How should they have known, again, any more than we ourselves to-day, how *extensive* a preaching was necessary to the purpose of "a witness" to all nations? Already, within thirty years, Paul could write to the Colossians as if perhaps these words might have been already fulfilled, and say that the Gospel had gone forth "in all the world" (Col. 1: 6). We have no right to read into these predictions of delay an indication of its duration which the words themselves do not convey, and

could not have suggested to the minds of those who first heard them.

But Dr. Brown refers with great confidence to the words of Paul in 2 Thessalonians 2: 1, 2, where, according to the authorized version, he exhorts the Thessalonians that they "be not shaken in mind, . . . as that the day of Christ is at hand," and tells them that that day cannot come "except there come a falling away first." Here, it is urged, is a passage which effectually sets aside the whole force of this argument from the uncertainty of the Lord's coming and the consequent duty of regarding the Advent as always *possibly* near. Paul, we are told, here expressly *forbids* the Thessalonians to regard the Advent as at hand, and tells them of an *evil* development which was to precede the Advent, and would occupy centuries in its growth. Therefore, it is inferred, we are no less at liberty to say that a thousand years of *holiness* must yet come and go before the Lord can come.[1]

To this argument we answer, in the first place, as above, that, however plain it has become to us that the predicted development of evil was to require centuries for its course, there is not a single word in the prediction to suggest this. The prophecy contains not a single chronological note —absolutely nothing which, prior to fulfilment, could compel any one to believe that the Advent

[1] *The Second Advent,* new ed., p. 43 *et seq.*

was impossible in that generation. The utmost that the passage could teach was that the Advent was not—to use the translation preferred by the American revisers—"*just* at hand." This might easily be true, and yet the Advent, to human knowledge, be so possible within that generation as to make it no less imperative to watch for the indications of its more imminent approach. And that this prophecy, and others which contain like intimations of a delay in the Advent, were not understood as of necessity forbidding the hope of Christ's return in the lifetime of the existing generation, is an undenied historical fact. It was generally believed in the primitive Church that this prophecy of the "man of sin" was to be fulfilled in a *personal* Anti-Christ, whose whole career would of course be run within a human lifetime. Hence there was nothing to hinder their believing that the "man of sin" might appear, and run his course, and be destroyed by the returning Lord, before that generation had passed away. And so, indeed, they did believe; for it is the notorious fact that the believers of the first and second centuries, with this epistle before them, did generally regard the second Advent as quite possible in their own time.

In the second place, if the rendering of the authorized version be taken, with Dr. Brown, as correct, it supposes a state of mind among the Thessalonians of which we have no example in the primi-

tive Church. In later days it has often been that Christians, under the influence of false teaching, have been "shaken in mind" and "troubled" by the belief that the day of Christ was at hand. Of such a feeling, in view of the possible nearness of the Advent, the early Church, however, seems to have known nothing. On the contrary, to them the Advent was an object of the most eager desire and affectionate longing. The sooner it came, the greater reason for the believer to rejoice. The glimpse of the feelings of the Thessalonians, which is given in the first epistle, shows us that they shared this universal feeling. How, then, *could* Paul have written as the authorized version represents him to have written? The difficulty disappears so soon as we adopt the more accurate rendering of the text of the revised version, "Nor yet be troubled, . . . as that the day of the Lord *is now present.*" Thus, what troubled the Thessalonians was *not* the possible imminence of the Advent, which could only have filled them with gladness, but what had been suggested by some false teachers, who taught—like some in our own time—that the day of the Lord was "*now present,*"[1] and had brought with it no personal return of the Lord, and no resurrection of those whom they had laid to sleep in Jesus. In other words, their error

[1] This is the constant meaning of the Greek verb here used, in other places in the New Testament. See Rom. 8:38; 1 Cor. 3:22; 7:26; Gal. 1:4; 2 Tim. 3:1; Heb. 9:9.

was closely akin to that of Hymenæus and Philetus, of whom we elsewhere read, who "concerning the truth had erred, saying that the resurrection was past already."[1]

This brings the epistle into full harmony with the historical facts as to the attitude of the Thessalonian and other primitive churches with regard to the Advent. But this interpretation, sustained by the highest exegetical authorities, makes it, if possible, clearer than ever that Paul did *not* intend to teach, as Dr. Brown and others would have it, that the Thessalonians should cease to regard that Advent as possible in their own lifetime. As to how long time would first elapse, Paul seems to have had no revelation. There is thus nothing in this passage, any more than in others which speak of delay in the Advent, which can invalidate our argument. It remains a fact that our Lord, when speaking of His second Advent, repeatedly insisted that no one knew the time, and upon that uncertainty based the command to watch for His Advent. If this command be binding upon each generation till He come—as He expressly said that it was—then is it not clear that Jesus never could have intended that men in any generation should be able to say that He could not come till centuries after they were dead and gone?

The doctrine of a Millennial age of righteous-

[1] 2 Tim. 2: 17, 18.

ness before the Advent is also directly contradicted by the uniform teachings of the New Testament as to the character and history of this present age or dispensation. We have in the Gospels and epistles many passages which professedly describe the condition of the world between the first and second Advents. These descriptions are neither few nor vague, nor of varied character. On the contrary, they are numerous, distinct and uniform in their representations. They all agree in representing the condition of the world during the absence of the Lord as marked by the dominance of moral evil. They do not, indeed, teach that there shall be *nothing* but evil—that there shall be no progress in good of any kind. They teach that the Gospel will yet be preached in the present age among all nations; that, as the blessed result of this, a multitude "no man can number" shall be gathered out from all nations to be "a first fruits unto God and the Lamb." Even more than this, we are told that God's wheat, *the true children of the Kingdom,* shall "grow"[1]—that is, they shall show more and more clearly their true spiritual character as God's children as the age goes on. But nowhere is it taught that this will ever have the effect of changing the dominant character of the present age. This present "age" or "world" (Gr. *aion*), is represented as continuing to the second coming of the Lord, which will mark "the

[1] Matt. 13:30.

end of the age." With His appearing will begin another "age," called, in distinction from the present, "the age (or world) to come."

Now, what has the New Testament to say as to the dominant character of the present age, reaching on until the second Advent? Absolutely nothing but evil! We are not told that it will be partly bad and partly good, that it was bad in the time of Christ, but might be expected gradually to change till it became good. On the contrary, it is condemned throughout. If it is said by Christ that during its course His "wheat" will grow, He also said, in the same sentence, that "*the tares,*" too, shall *grow.* That is, as God's people, so the children of the Wicked One shall develop their real character till the harvest, ever revealing more and more fully in their own lives the diabolic nature of all sin. Such are all the real representations of the New Testament.

As for the wisdom of this age, it is declared to be a "wisdom which comes to nought, and is, therefore, folly" (1 Cor. 2: 6); its moral characteristic is said to be "darkness" (Eph. 6: 12); it is called this present *evil* age (Gal. 1: 4); it has its god, who is, however, not the true and living God, but the devil (2 Cor. 4: 4); Christ came and gave Himself for our sins, that "he might deliver us from it" (Gal. 1: 4); to it, therefore, we are "not to be conformed" (Rom. 12: 2); nor, like Demas, to "love" it (2 Tim. 4: 10), lest Demas' end be

ours. Any exception to this mode of representation is not to be found in the New Testament.[1] How is it possible to reconcile with this the modern doctrine that a large part—if not the largest part—of this present age is to be marked by the binding of Satan and such a blessed state of things as the Old Testament prophets so fully predict?[2]

With such general statements as to the character of the present age agrees the teaching of many of the parables. Thus we have, for example, the parable of the marriage of the king's son (Matt. 22: 1–14), the object of which is to set forth the historical transfer of the preaching of the Gospel from the Jews to the Gentiles. The state of things depicted is represented as reaching to the time of the marriage, when the king comes in to see the guests. It thus covers this whole dispensation. And the application which the Lord Himself makes of the parable, as regards this present dispensation, is that "many are called, but few are chosen." But what meaning have these words as they stand in that parable, if for a large part or the most of

[1] The often alleged exception of the parable of the leaven has been already noticed in another connection.

[2] Similarly in Rom. 8: 18–23 Paul declares that the whole creation groans and likewise with it believers, for the time of the redemption of the body, which the context shows to be the time of its resurrection, *i. e.*, the Coming of Christ. Hence there can be no cessation of this "bondage of corruption," till Christ appears.—H. S. N.

the time, all are called, and all, or nearly all, are chosen?

The argument becomes yet more conclusive when we note still more specific predictions touching the course of things from the apostolic age to the second Advent. On the one hand, it is predicted that the Gospel should be preached "for a witness" to all nations, and that "*then*"—most significantly it does *not* say "when all the nations have accepted the Gospel—but "*then*," when the world-wide witness shall be complete, "*the end shall come.*" The words are such, plainly, as on the one hand to admit of very considerable delay, or, on the other hand, of comparatively little. We do not know how the Lord draws national lines. We do not know how much preaching in any given nation is necessary in the mind of God to serve the defined purpose of "a witness," or, as Peter puts it, "to take out a people." The words do then predict a universal preaching of the Gospel, but do not state what shall be the saving result, more or less. That in any case it shall not result, in any *true* sense of the word, in the conversion of all nations,[1] in the establishment of any such spiritual

[1] Where does the Bible ever speak of the mere nominal reception of the Gospel by a nation, as, *e. g.*, in Europe and America—as a conversion of that nation? Such a nominal reception of the Gospel by all nations may well enough be seen before the Lord returns, should His Advent be long delayed. But can any man soberly believe that this, if it took place, would be the fulfilment of the grand Old Testa-

reign of righteousness as so many in our land and age expect, should be abundantly clear from two classes of predictions, namely: the predictions of "the apostasy" and the "man of sin," and the predictions touching the Jewish nation. These will be considered in the next chapter.

ment prophecies of the golden age to come, or an answer to the petition, "Thy will be done on earth, as it is done in heaven."

IV

THE WITNESS OF SCRIPTURE

An Unbroken Continuity of Evil Till the Lord's Return—How Dr. Brown Meets This Difficulty—Greek Words for the Coming, and Their Connotation—The Conversion of the Jews to Introduce the Millennium—But This Synchronizes with the Coming—Texts That Show This.

THE classical passage touching the coming apostasy, as every Bible student knows, is the prediction of Paul in 2 Thessalonians 2. As regards the present argument, it is quite immaterial what particular development of evil is there predicted. That question is quite independent of the present argument, which is briefly as follows. The apostle in this passage predicts a certain development of evil which at the time of his writing was yet to be manifested before the coming of Christ. Of this "mystery of lawlessness"—as he calls it—he makes two affirmations, which are such as by no sound exegesis can allow us to maintain that, according to the teaching of Paul, a Millennium of righteousness is to be expected before the Lord's appearing. These affirmations are the following: *First,* that the evil had already begun to work in the days of the apostles; *second,* that it was to be brought to an

end "by the brightness of the Lord's coming." The apostle thus represents the development of evil of which he speaks as *unbroken* from his time quite to the Advent. That a universal conversion should do away with the evil predicted, before the coming of the Lord, is impossible; for the apostasy in question, which is to be destroyed by the appearing of the Lord, is represented as historically and spiritually identical and continuous with that "mystery of lawlessness" which Paul says was working even in his day. It cannot, therefore, refer to any new development of evil yet to begin and run its course *after* the expected Millennium. But this continuous and uninterrupted presence and working in the world and the Church of the "mystery of lawlessness" from Paul's day straight on to the Advent, utterly excludes the possibility of a thousand years or more of everywhere prevailing righteousness before that time.

So plain is this that the force of the argument can only be evaded by denying, as Dr. Brown has done, that the phrase, "the brightness of his coming," refers to the expected personal Advent.[1] It must refer, say some, to a coming of the Lord by the Spirit, or, as others will have it, to a providential judgment, destroying the apostasy at the beginning of the Millennial age. These, however, are utterly untenable interpretations of the passage. No one of them can be maintained except

[1] *The Second Advent*, new ed., pp. 453–462.

by disregarding alike the whole context of this and the foregoing epistle, and the usage—absolutely uniform—of the terms employed.

The terms involved are two—*parousia* and *epiphaneia.* As to the former, it is to be noted first, that, in the phrase "coming of the Lord," etc., as we often have it in our English version, are represented two distinct terms in the original. Sometimes the word "come" stands for the Greek *erchesthai,* and when it does, we freely grant that it does not of necessity denote a literal coming of the Lord. While this Greek verb denotes sometimes, no doubt, the future visible and personal appearing of the Lord, in other places it no less clearly denotes a coming of the Lord by His Spirit, as in John 14: 23, or in the ways of providential judgment, as in Revelation 2: 5–16. While this is true, however, of the word "coming," when it represents the word *erchesthai,* it is not true of that word when standing for the Greek *parousia.* Leaving the verse now in discussion out of the question, the word *parousia* occurs elsewhere twenty-three times in the New Testament, and in each of these places denotes and can denote only a personal and physical presence of the person of whom it is predicted. Thus Paul says, 1 Corinthians 16: 17, he was glad because of the *parousia* of Stephanas, and 2 Corinthians 7: 6, because of the *parousia* of Titus. He tells us that the Corinthians said that his "bodily presence," *parousia,* was

"weak," 2 Corinthians 10: 10, and hopes for the Philippians, that by his *parousia* again among them their rejoicing may be more abundant, Philippians 1: 26, and that meantime they may obey not, as in his *parousia* only, but also in his absence. In 2 Thessalonians 2: 9, we read of the *parousia* of "the man of sin." So in all the other sixteen places where the word occurs, it is admitted to refer to the personal Advent of the Lord. Of these sixteen instances, five occur in the preceding part of the epistles to the Thessalonians, and are admitted to refer to that personal Advent. Indeed, that *parousia* of the Lord, as every one admits, is the specific subject of these two epistles. When it occurs, the apostle says that the dead in Christ shall rise, and the living saints shall be translated. Concerning the same *parousia,* he exhorts them again in 2 Thessalonians 2 that they be not "shaken in mind or troubled," and tells them that that day of the *parousia* "shall not come except there come the apostasy first and that 'man of sin' be revealed, whom the Lord shall destroy with the manifestation of His *parousia.*" And we are asked to believe that, suddenly, in this, the *sixth* instance in these two epistles of the employment of this word, used in each case hitherto to denote that personal Advent which is their special subject, the apostle uses the word in a sense entirely different from that in which he had always employed it before, and that without the slightest

intimation that he now referred, not to the *parousia* of which he had all along been writing, but to a spiritual or providential *parousia* entirely distinct from it! How any one can believe this is past our understanding!

The case becomes the stronger that what has been said of *parousia* may also substantially be said of the word *epiphaneia,* which is coupled with it. Like *parousia,* that is only used in the New Testament of a *visible* manifestation. Its usage is even more precise, for in each of the five other places in which it occurs it is applied only to the personal appearing of the Lord *Himself,* once to His first Advent, four times to His second.[1] It would be impossible, we believe, to find in New Testament Greek any word which should more precisely and unambiguously denote the visible, bodily appearing of the Lord. And yet, in order to escape the otherwise inevitable conclusion that there will be a personal Advent before the full subjection of the world to Christ, we are asked to believe that Paul again, in the case of this word also, used it in a sense which it has nowhere else in the New Testament, to denote either a temporal judgment by purely natural and providential causes, or the manifestation of the Lord by His Spirit! We are free to say that if this phrase, "the manifestation of his coming,"[2] as here oc-

[1] 1 Tim. 6:14; 2 Tim. 1:10; 4:1–8; Tit. 2:13.
[2] Revised version.

curring, does not refer to the glorious visible appearing of the Lord as that which is to destroy "the man of sin," there is to our mind an end of certainty in Scripture exposition, and we should feel an emotion akin to despair in endeavouring to determine with any confidence what the words even of the plainest Scriptures might mean.

This passage, therefore, we conclude, teaches us in the most explicit language possible, that there will *not* be any universal subjection of the world to Christ previous to His personal appearing. The apostle expressly represents the development of evil which culminates at the appearing of "the man of sin" as *continuous* from his time on to the second Advent of the Lord. How can the argument be set aside? It stands thus: No universal subjection of the world to Christ, such as the Old Testament predicts, with the "mystery of lawlessness" working and "the apostasy" standing. But, according to Paul, this evil development stretches continuously from his day to the Advent. Therefore, there can be no universal subjection of the world to Christ prior to the Advent. It must, therefore, come after it.

But we reach the same conclusion no less certainly by another and quite independent line of prediction. It is agreed by all that so long as the Jewish nation remains cast out in unbelief with the curse upon them, the expected age of holiness cannot begin. It is by most evangelical com-

mentators, both Premillennialists and Postmillennialists, agreed that the conversion of Israel,—with, perhaps, their restoration to their own land,—is to be the grand event which will mark the initiation of the Millennial age. According to Dr. Brown and the many who follow him, this restoration of Israel is to precede, by more than a thousand years, the personal appearing of the Lord. We claim that, on the contrary, the Scriptures represent the rejection of Israel as continuing until the coming of the Lord, and again and again place their conversion in immediate connection with that event.

First of all, we may here note the eschatological discourse of our Lord in Matthew 24 and parallel passages. Whatever differences of detail we may meet in interpretation, there is little, if any, doubt that the predictions of tribulation which we find in that chapter before the twenty-eighth verse do have reference to the overthrow of Jerusalem by the Roman armies, 70 A. D. (cf. Luke 21: 20–24). But the twenty-ninth verse reads: "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, . . . and then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven, and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."

In this statement many have seen a great difficulty, in that, at first sight, it seems to predict a coming of the Son of Man in the clouds of heaven

in immediate connection with the destruction of Jerusalem. To meet this difficulty many have been the expedients. Certain rationalistic commentators boldly say that Christ expected or taught that He would come on that occasion, but was mistaken; others, that His disciples must have reported Him erroneously. These explanations, of course, we may dismiss from notice here. Others have assumed that the coming is undoubtedly the second coming, but that we have here a sudden and unmarked transition from the destruction of Jerusalem to the final judgment. But this overlooks the force of *eutheōs*, "immediately." Others, again, hold that the words in question have a double sense; that, in other terms, the Lord speaks of the destruction of the Jewish nationality in terms borrowed from, and therefore applying to, the scenes of the second coming. This, it is assumed, He might most fitly do, because the Jewish judgment was, without doubt, a type of the greater judgment yet to come, when He shall indeed appear in glory.[1]

But every interpretation which would find in these words either an exclusive or partial reference to the destruction of Jerusalem, is exposed to certain fatal objections. First, while, as admitted above, the English phrase, "the coming of the Lord," does not of necessity refer to the sec-

[1] So Dr. Brown, in *The Second Advent*, new ed., p. 463 *et seq.*

ond Advent, yet usage is not thus variant as to the phrase, "coming of the Son of Man in the clouds of heaven." No phrase in the New Testament has a more precise and definite meaning. It can be shown that always and only, in every other place, it refers to the personal, glorious appearing, and that only. This alone should make us hesitate long before assuming here a meaning so at variance with the ordinary usage of the phrase. But, quite apart from that, the reference of these words to the destruction of Jerusalem is absolutely excluded by the fact that the coming in question, whatever its nature may be, figurative or literal, is expressly said to take place "*after*" the Jewish tribulation. Plainly, if it is "after" it, then it *cannot* be that prior event. When now we ask whether there was any great judgment "immediately *after*" the destruction of Jerusalem which might fitly be described by such startling and exceptional phraseology as a "coming of the Son of Man in the clouds of heaven," history answers that there was then nothing of the kind.

What are we, then, to make of the passage? Luke's account gives us the true solution of the difficulty. According to that version of the discourse, our Lord did not make the term "tribulation" to include—as so many, with Matthew alone before their eyes, have hastily assumed—*only* the destruction of the Holy City and the accompanying calamities. On the contrary, according to

Luke, the Lord specifically included in the tribulation predicted, not only the destruction of the city, the massacre and enslavement of the people, but a scattering of the Jews among all nations, and a treading down of Jerusalem by the Gentiles, "*until the time of the Gentiles be fulfilled*" (Luke 21: 24). These words clearly *forbid* us to limit the tribulation to the scenes immediately connected with the siege and capture of the Holy City by Titus. They distinctly make the "tribulation" to comprehend the whole long series of calamities which have befallen the Jewish nation from that day to the present time, and on to their future final end. The tribulation predicted has been, and is still, a present, visible fact of history. The Jews are still captive among all nations—a nation without a country. Despite the endeavours and plans of a Julian and a Napoleon to restore and rebuild Jerusalem, the city has continued, as the Lord foretold, to be trampled under foot—first by the Romans, then by the Saracens, and then by the Ottoman Turk, as to-day.

But this present time of Israel's tribulation is sooner or later to end. This is foretold by almost all the prophets. The very phrase, "*After* that tribulation," in this passage, teaches the same truth. The "coming" spoken of, whatever it be, is therefore clearly future, and is to follow closely upon the cessation of Israel's present tribulations. But what is to happen when the Jewish tribula-

tion ends? How could words be plainer than this solemn declaration: "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, . . . and then shall appear the Son of Man in heaven, . . . and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." *"Immediately," eutheōs!* The word occurs eighty times in the New Testament, and always denotes the closest consecution of one event upon another. How, then, we can find room to thrust in here a long period of Millennial glory between the termination of the Jewish tribulation and the Advent without the most violent and unwarrantable perversion of Scripture language we are quite at a loss to see. In a word, then, the argument stands thus: There can be no Millennium while Israel's tribulation lasts. But the Lord tells us that the ending of that tribulation shall be "immediately" followed, not by a Millennium of peace and righteousness, but by distress and perplexity of nations, and other solemn omens of His instant appearing. Millennium, therefore, there *cannot* be, this side of the glorious epiphany. It must, therefore, be the other side.[1]

[1] Note by the Editor. This view of "The Great Tribulation" as here set forth by Dr. Kellogg may seem to differ from that generally held now by Premillennialists. On closer examination of the author's views this variance is not so marked. He seems to have considered the Jewish War and Dispersion in 70 A. D. as the beginning of the Tribulation. See Luke 21:23–24. It was not to stop then, nor till

This interpretation, which takes the words in their ordinary and obvious sense, is further confirmed by other Scriptures, which distinctly synchronize the repentance of Israel and the second appearing of Messiah. Thus, in Revelation 1: 7, we read, "Behold, he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him; and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him." That these words are an announcement of the second Advent is generally agreed. But if the first phrase undoubtedly refers us to the sublime vision of the Book of Daniel, where one like unto the Son of Man comes in the clouds of heaven to receive for himself a kingdom, the latter phrase (found also in Matthew 24: 30) is no less certainly a literal translation of the Hebrew of Zechariah 12: 10. The event described by Zechariah is thus directly connected by the apostle, as also by the Lord, with the glorious appearing of Christ in the clouds of heaven. But, without doubt, what the prophet Zechariah there describes is the future national repentance of Israel, when there shall be poured out upon them "the Spirit of grace and of supplications," and "they shall look upon him whom they have pierced, and shall mourn for him as one mourneth

Israel repents. Its climax is future. The author frequently elsewhere wrote of the culmination of evil at the End, *e. g.* See his sermon "The Twofold Development," p. 294, *The Past, a Prophecy of the Future.* Also pp. 303, 304.—H. S. N.

for his only son," and "there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness." [1]

It is easy, of course, to seek to evade the force of this by asserting, as many have done, that the Lord and the apostles did not mean to indicate an interpretation, but only an application of the words of the prophet, without thereby signifying anything as to their actual meaning. That the maxim, "application is not interpretation," is sound, no intelligent interpreter will deny. That the maxim applies in any given case needs, however, to be proved. It cannot be assumed at convenience. In any case, it is a maxim which needs to be used with exceeding caution. We all know the use which rationalistic commentators make of it in getting rid of inconvenient New Testament interpretations of Messianic prophecies of the first Advent. We need to be careful that we do not follow them in our treatment of New Testament references of Old Testament passages to the second Advent.

That in the present case we have something more than application, even an implied interpretation, is clear from other Scriptures; for, in the first place, turning to that part of Zechariah in which the cited words occur (Zech. 14: 4–5), we find that Zechariah tells us plainly that in that day of the awful ending of Israel's tribulations, the

[1] Zech. 13: 1; cf. also 14: 4, 5.

feet of the Lord "shall stand upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east"; and then he adds, "the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee."[1] Is all this figurative language, as we are often told? Then what possible meaning can be assigned to the careful topographical specifications of the passage? But, turning again to the New Testament, we find that the apostle Paul (1 Thess. 3: 13) directly applies the latter phrase to the future glorious Advent of the Lord with His saints for resurrection.

If any further confirmation be needed as to the teaching of these and yet other passages that might be cited,[2] we have it in the discourse of Peter to the Jews in Acts 3: 19–21. According to the accurate rendering of the revised version, he used the following language as an argument why the Jews should turn from their sins: "Repent ye and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, that so there may come seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send the Christ who hath been appointed for you, even Jesus, whom the heavens must receive until the times of restoration of all things." In justification of this reading, adopted by the revisers, it

[1] See Prof. Plumptre's *Exposition of the Epistles to the Seven Churches*, p. 27.

[2] As, for example, Dan. 12: 1–3, 6, 7, where the end of Israel's tribulation is explicitly synchronized with the resurrection of the righteous; and also Isaiah 25: 8, with context, as applied by Paul, 1 Cor. 15: 54.

must be observed that the received version has disregarded uniform usage in making the final particle, *hopōs*, to have a temporal sense. The meaning of the word absolutely forbids the old rendering, "that your sins may be blotted out *when* the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord," etc. The Jews, then, are herein exhorted to repent *in order "that* God may send the Christ who hath been appointed for them, even Jesus."

Now, as to what this language may mean, we have the authority of Prof. Addison Alexander for saying that the sending of Christ "cannot refer to our Lord's first appearance as a Saviour, which had already taken place," but must refer "either to His visible return hereafter, or to His presence in the hearts of individuals." He thinks that the latter is a better motive to repentance, and, if we understand him, he is therefore inclined to prefer it, but candidly adds that "the reference of the words to the second Advent *agrees with all analogy and usage*, as the Father is not said elsewhere to send the Son, as He is said to send the Spirit, into the hearts of men, as a matter of inward and invisible experience, but into the world, as a literal, external fact of history."[1] It then is a fact that this passage, according to "all analogy and usage," represents the second appearing of the

[1] See his *Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles, sub loc. cit.*

Lord as immediately conditioned in the Divine plan by the repentance of the Jewish nation.[1] As we have seen that Paul and John imply by their use of Scripture, so Peter in the above passage directly teaches that *whenever Israel repents, Christ will come,* and thus confirms the conclusions before reached, that there will intervene no long Millennial period between Israel's conversion and the Advent.[2]

This exhibition of Scriptural testimony, though far from exhaustive, must suffice for the present. We conclude, in full accord with the direct statement of the Apocalypse, that the time when "the kingdom of the world" becomes "the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ," is the "time of the dead to be judged," "and the time to give their reward to . . . the prophets, and to the saints;"[3] that is to say, it is the time of the glorious appearing of the Lord to execute judg-

[1] So did Samuel Rutherford understand the Scripture. He writes: "I have been this time by-passed thinking much of the incoming of the kirk of the Jews. Pray for them. . . . That were a glad day to see us and them both sit down at one table, and Christ at the head of the table. Then would our Lord come shortly with his fair guard to hold his great court." (*Letters,* p. 49.)

[2] For a much fuller presentation of the bearing of the prophecies concerning the Jews upon the question of a Premillennial Advent, see Chapters 3, 4, and 5 of the author's work, *The Jews; or, Prediction and Fulfilment:* New York, A. D. F. Randolph & Co., 1883.

[3] Rev. 11:15–18, revised version, cf. 10:7.

ment, and not an epoch a thousand years or more before it. The modern doctrine of a Millennium of righteousness between the present time and the second Advent we are thus compelled to regard as certainly contrary to the teachings of the inspired Word. We look not for a Millennium first, but for "the blessed hope, even the appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ."

V

MODERN PREACHING AND THE LORD'S RETURN

Its Silence on This Subject, Compared with Apostolic Emphasis—The Premillennialist Not the Only One Who Encounters Difficulties—Three Principles of Sound Biblical Interpretation.

TO the previous Scriptural argument one more consideration may be added. A doctrine may be rightly judged by its fruits. Let the now prevailing theory of a Millennium of righteousness before the Advent be tested in this way. It is a patent fact that the effect of the general reception of the doctrine of a Millennial age before the Advent has proved the occasion of a very general departure from the apostolic type of preaching and teaching concerning the Advent. Thus, from the apostles there are few doctrines of which we hear more than of the second Advent; it is equally certain that from the pulpit of to-day, in our own land at least, there are few doctrines of which we hear less. "It is a marked characteristic of the apostolic writings," says Dr. Charles Hodge in his *Theology*, "that they give such prominence to the doctrine of the Second Advent." "The promise of Christ's Second Coming," he continues, "had taken a deep

hold on the minds of the apostles and of all the early Christians." "It is certain," he says again, "that the apostles believed that Christ would come visibly and with great glory, and that they held that coming to be the great object of expectation and desire." But how few now except Premillenarians ever refer to the Advent in their preaching! And the contrast is no less evident in the form in which it is set forth, when spoken of at all. In the writings of the apostles and the early Christians, the Advent is undeniably always spoken of as possibly near. "We which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord," is the keynote of apostolic preaching on this subject. But when does one hear preaching of this tone from the lips of one holding the now prevailing view upon this subject?

We affirm, then, without fear of contradiction, that in these respects the preaching of our time, in America, at least, has sadly fallen away from the apostolic standard. We affirm, moreover, that this declension from the apostolic type of preaching is directly and demonstrably due to the general acceptance of the doctrine that a Millennium must intervene between the present time and the appearing of the Lord. For the change is quite a modern one. One needs only to go back to the writings of Luther, or even of Rutherford, or Knox, or Baxter, to find the Advent spoken of in a very different tone from what is commonly heard in

these days. The declension may be traced back, quite distinctly, to about the time of the first promulgation of the modern doctrine by Mr. Whitby, in the early part of the eighteenth century. And it is plain that the connection between that theory and the modern type of preaching on the Advent is not accidental, but logical and necessary. For how can a man who on the one Sabbath tells his people of a glorious age of Gospel triumph yet to come before the appearing of the Lord, speak on the next Sabbath of those among his hearers "who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord"?

But this is not all. For while, on the one hand, in almost all the preaching of the day, we hear much of a good time which is coming before the advent of the Lord, we find the apostles continually warning the Church that the last days, however much of "the form of godliness" there may be, shall not be good days, but "evil and perilous times." Where men are now often even heard warning their people against the idea of some modern interpreters of prophecy, that the appearing of the Master may be near, we hear Christ, even two thousand years ago, warning His disciples against ever saying in their hearts, "My Lord delayeth his coming," or looking forward in this present age to times of peace and safety. The earnest piety and loyalty to Christ of many who preach after this manner no one can justly dispute;

but it only makes the irresistible logic of this unscriptural theory the more evident, that even the best of men have not found themselves practically able to resist its influence upon their preaching. That the facts are as indicated, no observant person will dispute. There is a very marked and suggestive contrast in these points between the modern and the primitive style of preaching. Surely it ought to be self-evident that any theory of interpretation, which, both by the laws of an inevitable logic and as a matter of historical fact, thus constrains even the best of men to deviate so widely from the tone of apostolic preaching on these subjects, is shown by that fact to be erroneous. We are not bound at once to explain all difficulties, or to frame for ourselves at once another theory, but without waiting for that, we *are* bound to reject and keep forever clear of all such theories as logically and practically hinder us from preaching precisely as the Lord and the inspired apostles preached. Let us try to preach about the Advent as they did. Our times need it.[1]

[1] So that profound and devout theologian, Bp. Martensen: —"There are certain articles of faith which should, with regard to the special character of the times, be specially brought forward. In our days, *e. g.*, there is obvious need that the prophetic teaching concerning the last things and our Lord's second Advent should be dwelt upon. The more decidedly the signs of the times show that the day is at hand, the more important it is that the views of the world and of life prevailing in the church should be developed in this direction also."—*Christian Ethics* (*Social*), vol. ii., p.

From the above considerations we are compelled to conclude that the numerous prophecies in the Old Testament of a reign of righteousness on earth cannot possibly refer to a period of time before the Advent of the Lord, but must find their fulfilment, in some sense or other, after that event. That in our endeavours to adjust these prophecies in their mutual relations, and frame to ourselves a consistent and clear picture of the precise nature and order of events which shall succeed the Advent, we shall meet with difficulties, and that some of these may even be beyond our power as yet to solve, those who have most studied these questions will be the most ready to admit. But this is only what, in dealing with subjects of this nature, we might reasonably expect, and even though many questions may be asked which we cannot answer, difficulties urged which we cannot explain, it will by no means follow that the arguments adduced above are nullified. Great as the difficulties may be on the hypothesis for which we have argued, yet if to be rid of these we set aside the plain Scriptures cited, and affirm in the face of them an age of universal holiness before the Advent, we find ourselves involved in difficulties greater far. And yet many there are who do not see this. They feel that the arguments which are urged against the

324. See also a similar exhortation in a pastoral letter to the clergy of his diocese by the Bishop of Durham, the late Dr. H. C. G. Moule.—H. S. N.

Premillennial doctrine are such as to nullify all that has been advanced upon the other side.

What specific replies our ablest opponents have made to our Scriptural argument, we have already seen. In addition to this it will be well, however, to hear also what positive Scripture arguments are urged against us in support of the modern assertion that the world must be converted, and an age of universal righteousness follow before the Lord's return can rightly be expected.

Before reviewing these in detail, three principles should be noted and emphasized, which have an important bearing on the decision of this question. The first is this,—that when difficulties are urged against any doctrine which is affirmed to be taught in the Bible, one can, at the utmost, only be required to show that a solution of the alleged difficulty is *possible*. Moreover, in cases where there may be several possible solutions of the difficulty, it cannot rightly be demanded, in order to the rebuttal of an objection, that one shall show that one of these rather than another is certainly the correct solution of the matter. This principle is constantly recognized in our controversy with sceptical objectors with regard to various contradictions which they claim to find in the Scriptures. But, although often forgotten, the principle applies with full force to this Premillennial discussion also. It is enough, when men refer to passages which they declare to be inconsistent with

the Premillennial doctrine, to show that, according to the received laws of exegesis, a reconciliation is possible.

In the second place, even this cannot in all cases be justly required. For, if once any doctrine be proved on exegetical grounds to be taught in the Word of God, then, in order to prove the doctrine false, it cannot suffice to show that the supposition of its truth raises even unanswerable difficulties. Otherwise it were easy to show that not only the doctrine of the Premillennial Advent, but even still more the doctrines of the incarnation and the atonement were false,—as indeed on the very principle upon which many reject Premillennialism, men have often tried to do. It is certain that, in several instances, doctrines are clearly taught in Scripture, the harmony between which, with our present knowledge, it is difficult if not impossible to see. Such are, for example, the true deity and the true humanity of our Lord, the absolute sovereignty of God, and the perfect freedom and responsibility of man. And yet, if in such cases each of two apparently conflicting doctrines be exegetically established, as taught in the Word of God, the part of devout Christian reason is—not to reject one through zeal to maintain the other—but humbly to accept both in unquestioning faith as revealed truths, and wait in patience for the coming of that day wherein the shadows shall flee away and in God's light we shall all see light.

So in regard to this doctrine of the Premillennial Advent. We may readily admit that there are Scripture statements which it is difficult or even impossible with certainty to reconcile with the supposition of the truth of the doctrine. But this is not enough to prove it heresy or error. It must be shown that the Premillennial interpretation of the passages cited in proof is erroneous, as judged by the laws of grammar and the usage of words. Dr. Charles Hodge, when considering objections to the doctrine of the atonement, has most justly said—"The only legitimate method of controverting a doctrine which purports to be founded on the Scriptures is the exegetical."[1] We insist that this principle shall be regarded in this Premillennial discussion. To illustrate,—those who deny that the Scriptures exclude an age of universal righteousness before the Advent have not merely to show that our interpretation of 2 Thessalonians 2 is difficult to harmonize with other Scriptures. That may be so, and yet the doctrine none the less be true. They are bound rather to show that the apostle, interpreted according to the established usage of the terms he employs, and the rules of Greek grammar, does not teach that "the mystery of lawlessness" shall work continuously from his time to the second Advent.

A third principle also needs to be noted, of no less moment in its bearing on the Premillennial

[1] *Systematic Theology*, vol. ii., p. 527.

discussion. It is known as the law of "prophetic perspective," and may be thus stated, namely,—That two events in any prophecy are mentioned *together or in immediate consecution,* is no proof that such events will therefore happen simultaneously or in immediate succession, except this be explicitly so stated in the Scripture. As a matter of fact, we know that, with but few exceptions, the Holy Spirit revealed to the prophets only the nature and the order of predicted events; but very rarely the interval of time between them. Illustrations are numerous. The first and second Advents and their accompanying events, the captivity and the restoration of Israel are repeatedly predicted, the one in one sentence, the other in the next, without a hint that there should be any interval between the two. And yet, hundreds of years were to intervene. God has revealed *what* will happen, and very often the order also of events, but commonly He has kept "the times and the seasons" in His own power. This principle is so clear that it is freely admitted on both sides. All the stranger it seems that our opponents cannot perceive that with the application of this principle a large part of the difficulties, which they urge as against the truth of the Premillennial doctrine, at once disappear.

In illustration may be mentioned a common assumption which underlies many of the arguments which are urged from Scripture against the pos-

sibility of a Premillennial Advent. It is constantly taken for granted that the common Scripture phrases, "the day of the Lord," "the day of judgment," and other similar expressions, denote a very brief period of time. If this be admitted, it requires no special sagacity to see that to assign events so numerous and diverse as Premillennialists do to that period involves inevitable contradictions and absurdities. But where is the Scripture which teaches that the great day of the Lord will be a *short* period of time? Certainly the phrase itself does not teach it. The word "day," so constantly used in connection with our Lord's second appearing, again and again in the Scriptures denotes a period of centuries. The day of Israel's captivity, of which the prophets have so much to say, has already lasted about 2,400 years. The creative "days" of Genesis, in the understanding of almost all competent interpreters in our time, denote periods of duration vastly greater still. So, while it is true enough—as Dr. Charles Hodge, arguing against Premillennialism, tells us—that the phrase, "*the* last day," denotes "*a known and definite period*," it by no means follows, as his argument assumes, that it therefore denotes a *brief* period.[1]

After the same manner is used even the word "hour," as applied to the time of the Lord's *parousia*. Yet Dr. Hodge argues from this use

[1] *Systematic Theology*, vol. iii., p. 840.

of the word in the resurrection prophecy in John 5: 28, 29, that this teaches the resurrection of the righteous must take place at the same time with that of the wicked, and not be Premillennial, as the Premillennialists understand the Scripture to teach.[1] The whole force of this argument depends upon the assumption that this word "hour" must denote an extremely brief portion of time. But that we have no right to assume this is clear even from the context. For if we read in John 5: 28, 29, of an "hour in which 'all that are in the graves' shall hear the voice of the Son of Man, 'and shall come forth,'" so do we also read in the immediately preceding context, verse 25, of an "hour" which "*now is,*" in which the (spiritually?) dead "shall hear the voice of the Son of Man, and they which hear shall live;" and again of an "hour," John 4: 21, 23, when neither in Jerusalem nor in the mountain of Samaria, men "shall worship the Father," etc. But in point of fact, in each of these last two instances the term "hour" is proven to have covered already a period of more than eighteen centuries. Why, then, may not the "hour" which is to be signalized by the resurrection of all the dead from the graves, for all these words teach, also denote a period of centuries?[2]

[1] *Systematic Theology,* vol. iii., p. 840.

[2] Cf. also 1 John 2: 18 another use of "hour" covering this whole Gospel age.—H. S. N.

That Christ's coming *will* introduce a period or *aion* of lengthened duration is distinctly intimated in Acts 3: 19, 21, where we read of "times of restoration," and "times of refreshing," from the presence of the Lord, to be introduced by His future advent. Analogous expressions are "the times of the Gentiles," Luke 21: 24; "times of ignorance," Acts 17: 30; "the last times," 1 Peter 1: 20; in all of which these plurals indicate a prolonged dispensational period. There is, therefore, no reason to assume that the "day of the Lord" must be a brief period, but rather that it will probably prove to have a lengthened duration. And that being granted, a very large part of the difficulties urged against the Premillennialist eschatology cease to be insuperable. Let this principle, then, be kept in mind—that two events are predicted together, can never prove that they shall occur together or in immediate consecution.

VI

OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED

Dr. Brown's Nine Propositions Examined and Answered.

IN now reviewing the positive argument which is urged against the truth of Premillennialism, we may take as a representative of the opposite view, the Rev. Dr. Brown, author of the well-known work, *The Second Advent,* written in attempted refutation of the Premillennial doctrine. That work will be generally admitted to be the most able presentation of that side of the question which has yet appeared.[1] He sums up his argument in nine propositions, which shall be given, for the most part, in his own words.

I. His first proposition and argument is as follows:

"The Church will be absolutely complete at Christ's coming." Therefore, there can be no conversion of the nations after the coming of Christ; *ergo,* the universal turning of the nations

[1] Postmillennialists who hold to the Bible's absolute authority will, I believe, still grant the accuracy of this appraisement of Dr. Brown's book. From others it will perhaps evoke a smile, since not a few books have appeared, later by several decades than Dr. Brown's, which attack the doctrine of the Premillennial advent from the postulates of the higher critics.—H. S. N.

unto God must take place before the advent, and not after.

In expounding this proposition he defines "the church" to be "all that are to be saved." The passages of Scripture on which he adduces in support of his proposition are the following: 2 Thessalonians 1: 10: "When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all that believe." These words, no doubt, say that when Christ comes all believers shall admire Him, yet how can that possibly prove that after that no one shall come to believe on Him? When Moses delivered Israel from Egypt he saved all that believed on him. Does that prove that none could have believed on Moses after that? Will any say that Christ could not be said to be admired by all believers at His coming, if any believed on Him after His coming? Yes, says Dr. Brown, because "*all* that believe" must include all that ever have believed or ever shall believe on Christ to all eternity. Hence, since at His coming "all" admire Him, it is plain that by that time the number of the elect must be complete.

But what proof is there that in this place the word "all" must thus include all that could possibly be put into it? That this word is not thus used in every case is so certain as to be denied by no one. The same principle which Dr. Brown assumes here, carried elsewhere, would prove from Romans 5: 18 the universal salvation of all men,

and from Colossians 1: 20, even the salvation of the devil and all his angels. Indeed, it is precisely after Dr. Brown's method of argument that Universalists seek to establish their belief in the final salvation of all rational creatures. But the mere use of the word "all," of itself, proves very little. That in any particular case it has the broadest sense possible, always needs to be proved. That it has such a sense here no evidence is offered. Yet, without that evidence, Dr. Brown's argument from this passage proves nothing! But when we look at the Greek text of the passage, we find that the evidence is on the other side; for the participle which is rendered "them that believe," is in the past tense, so that the word "all" is thereby strictly limited to those who shall have believed before the Advent. The New Testament revisers have accordingly rendered the participle, "them that *believed.*" The sense of the words, then, is simply that all who, up to the time of the Advent, shall have believed on Jesus, will then admire Him. As to whether, after the Advent, others shall be saved or not, the words teach nothing. They are equally consistent with either supposition.

Again, Dr. Brown, in further proof of the above proposition, adduces the following passages: Ephesians 5: 25–27: "Christ loved the Church and gave himself for it . . . that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot nor wrinkle, or any such thing." Colossians

1: 22: "To present you holy and unblamable and unreprovable in his sight." 1 Thessalonians 3: 13: "To the end that he may establish your hearts unblamable before God . . . at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints." And Jude 24: "To present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy."

Let it be remembered that these texts are cited to show that there can be no salvation of "a remnant" of the nations, such as Premillennialists believe the Scripture teaches, after the Lord returns. But what bearing on this question these passages can have is truly hard to see. In only one of the four is the Advent mentioned. In three of the four the word used is not "church," nor any universal term, but simply "you" and "your." The primary reference of these pronouns is certainly to those to whom the epistles were written. That they were intended to include all who are ever to be saved, there is no evidence in the words or in their context, nor does Dr. Brown supply the lack from any other source. They give not a hint on the question under discussion, one way or the other. Their only value as proof must be in connection with the remaining passage, Ephesians 5: 27, in which the word "church" occurs. The Advent, indeed, is not mentioned in this passage, but from the other texts cited we may doubtless rightfully infer that Paul here refers to that presentation of the saints before Christ which is else-

where connected with His coming. And yet the passage is no more decisive, as regards the point at issue, than the texts already reviewed.

For, in order that this text shall be valid evidence against the doctrine of the Premillennial Advent, three things have to be assumed. First, that it is absolutely certain that the word "church," as here used, denotes the *total* number of the saved; secondly, that it is equally certain that there shall never be in the future more than one manifestation of Christ in connection with this earth; and thirdly, that the presentation of the Church shall take place *immediately* after our Lord's return to earth. If any one of these three points be erroneous or doubtful, then it is impossible that the passage should prove anything against the doctrine of a Premillennial Advent. But each of the above points has been doubted or denied by learned, devout and evangelical interpreters of Scripture, and that not without reason. Some maintain that the word "church," in its technical New Testament sense, as applied to the body of the saved, denotes simply the body of all that shall be saved ("called out" from among men, as the Greek word suggests), between Adam and the second Advent; a definition for which much might be said. If that be the Scriptural definition of the term, then its use here warrants no inference as to whether any shall be saved or not after the Second Advent.

Again, the Rev. Dr. Craven, of the Presbyterian Church, in the American edition of *Lange's Commentary on the Apocalypse,* suggests that very possibly, as in the Old Testament, so in the New, two future advents may be predicted, with no intimation of an interval between them, so that prior to fulfilment it is impossible to distinguish the one from the other.[1] If this should be so, which it would be very hard to disprove, then, again, it is clear that this passage can be held to imply nothing against the doctrine of a Premillennial Advent; for, in that case, even if the word "church" be held to include here all that *ever* shall be saved, still the *completeness* of the Church at the *Post*millennial Advent would be perfectly consistent with the *in*completeness of the Church at a *Pre*millennial Advent.

But we may pass by both these solutions of the difficulty. We may grant that the term "church" in this place includes the whole number of the saved; also that there shall certainly be only one return of Christ to this world, and that the presentation of the completed Church before Him is to take place in connection with that one future return; still the text is not inconsistent with the Premillennial doctrine, except it can be shown that the presentation of which this passage speaks is to take place *immediately* upon the return of the

[1] *Op. cit.;* "Note on the Future Advent of Christ," pp. 340, 341.

Lord. But where is there a word in Holy Scripture which declares that it shall *immediately* follow the glorious epiphany? 1 Thessalonians 3: 13 speaks of a presentation "at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints," but does not say that it shall be *immediately* upon the coming.

All this is true, assuming that the word there used, *parousia,* means precisely "coming." In fact, however, it does not; that meaning is reserved for *erchesthai. Parousia* is, more exactly, "presence." This is suggested in the margin in all places where it is rendered "coming" in the text of the revised version. Hence, when we examine Scripture usage, we find that instead of indicating only a certain precise moment of time, it is a term which may as readily include a prolonged period. Paul's *parousia* in Corinth (2 Cor. 10: 10) lasted for two years; the first *parousia* of our Lord thirty-three years; the *parousia* of the "man of sin" (2 Thess. 2: 9), if, with the Westminster divines, we interpret this of the papal power, has already continued over 1,200 years! Not only so, but the preposition *en,* here rendered "at,"—according to the highest authority in New Testament grammar, often denotes—not the point of time at which—but *the period within which* a given event occurs.[1] It is plain, then, that this

[1] See Winer: *Grammar of the N. T. Greek,* 8th Eng. ed., p. 482.

passage, according to the established usage of the terms employed, simply teaches that within the time covered by the next *parousia* of our Lord—be that of short or long duration—the Church shall be presented before Him, in some formal way, in glory. Nothing more definite can be extracted from these words, for it is not there.

These passages, therefore, whether taken singly or together, do not teach that the public presentation of the Church shall take place *immediately* upon the Lord's return. But except this can be proved, then, for this reason, again, Dr. Brown's argument falls to the ground. For, in the absence of such proof, it is evident that if it appear from other Scriptures—as Premillennialists believe—that the turning of the "remnant" of the nations to the Lord, and the final completion of the "church," as defined by Dr. Brown, must follow Christ's glorious appearing, there is nothing in these words cited which is irreconcilable with this. We should, in that case, only have to suppose that the term *parousia,* as applied to our Lord's Second Advent, covered, as in other cases, a prolonged period, and that the presentation of the completed Church in glory marked—not the time of the glorious Epiphany—but some subsequent period of the *parousia.* It would still be true, in the precise sense of the words, that it would take place, in apostolic phraseology, *en te parousia*

Christou—in or at Christ's *parousia* or "presence."

There are, therefore, no less than three independent suppositions, each of which is at least quite possibly true, on either of which Dr. Brown's attempt to make out a contradiction here to the doctrine of the Premillennial Advent becomes a total failure.

Dr. Brown next cites, in support of this same proposition, 1 Corinthians 15: 23, where of the resurrection we are told that "they that are Christ's" (rise) "at his coming." Here he insists that as the foregoing words, "*in Adam all died,*" include "the whole federal offspring of Adam," so the words, "*that they are Christ's,*" must include the whole federal offspring of Christ, *i. e.*, the total number of the saved, and therefore teach that they all will be made alive together at His coming. Whence, he argues, it is clear that there can be no addition to "those who are Christ's" after the coming; *ergo*, Premillennialism contradicts the Scriptures. On this assumed meaning of the phrase in question he stakes the whole argument. If the phrase "they that are Christ's" be *not* coextensive with the "all" who died in Adam as denoting in either case alike the *whole* federal offspring, then his argument does not touch the point in debate, and the Premillennial argument remains intact.

But it so happens that the meaning which Dr.

Brown insists that this phrase *must* have, is just the one meaning which it *cannot* have. It is absolutely certain that the words, "they that are Christ's,"—as denoting those who shall rise from the dead at His coming—do *not* include "the whole federal offspring of Christ." First, it is certain that, in the nature of the case, Enoch and Elijah must be excluded. In the second place, it is no less certain that we must exclude all those many saints of the old dispensation of whom we read in Matthew 27:52, 53, "that they came out of their graves after Christ's resurrection and appeared to many." In the third place, it is equally clear that we must exclude all those of "Christ's federal offspring" *who shall be found alive at His coming,* of whom Paul himself says that they shall not sleep, but shall be changed. As they shall never die, they cannot be raised. These three exceptions are enough to settle the question that what Dr. Brown declares the words *must* mean, that they *cannot* mean. If, then, the phrase, "they that are Christ's at his coming," does not denote all the saved, but only a certain portion of them, then it is evident that if it be elsewhere taught, as we have abundant reason to believe, that the subjection of all nations to Christ must follow the appearing, then these words teach nothing which is inconsistent with this.

Under this same head Dr. Brown adds another argument, which, however, has no bearing on this

particular proposition. He affirms that the doctrine of the Premillennial Advent supposes a distinction in glory between the saints who shall have a part in the first resurrection and reign with Christ, and other saints who, not being born till after the Advent, must be excluded from that privilege. That there should be such a distinction made, to the disadvantage of the Millennial saints, in Dr. Brown's opinion is inconceivable, and that for the following reason. The glory of the saved, he tells us, is represented in the Word of God as flowing from their union with Christ, while, according to the Premillennial view, it is thus determined by the circumstances of the time and place under which they lived. To this we reply, that this representation of Scripture teaching is only partial, and because partial, therefore untrue.

The Biblical teaching, as to the reward of the saints, may be briefly stated thus: The glory of the saved, as to the *fact* of it, *is* determined solely by their union with Christ; but as to the *manner* of it and the *degree* of it, it is determined by their *works*—in particular by the extent and degree of their self-denial and sufferings for the name of Christ. These, again, will plainly be in part determined by the sovereignly arranged circumstances of the time and place where the life of each may be appointed. Hence, according to the Scripture, even among the saints of *this* dispensation, differences in the *degree* of glory will obtain,

which will have been *ultimately* determined by the conditions under which different saints have lived. Indeed, this is so even in this present life. Even in this world, while there have been no differences among believers as to the fact of salvation, and the condition of it, there have been very great differences as to the rank and privilege conferred, both upon individuals and upon whole classes of believers in different dispensations. God, in this matter, has always acted as a sovereign. That a Calvinist should make such an objection as this to Premillennialism is truly surprising. It is enough, then, to reply, that if it should appear that there should be distinction in privilege between the saints of the Millennial dispensation and those of this present age, this, instead of being inconsistent with the Gospel, would only be in full accord both with the Scripture and all experience of God's dealings with believers hitherto.

II. Dr. Brown's second proposition against Premillennialism is as follows:

"Christ's second coming will exhaust the object of the Scriptures." If the nations are to be brought into subjection to Christ after the Advent, then the means of grace, and, chief among them, the written Word of God, must go over. But, he argues, that is inconceivable, because much of the New Testament would be no longer relevant. He refers especially to the great importance which in the New Testament is attached to the Second

Advent itself, as a motive of faithfulness in Christian duty. But what relevancy in this motive, after the Advent shall be over? Hence he concludes again that all who are to be saved at all, must be saved in this present dispensation, and after Christ's coming there can be no more salvation.

To this we answer, that the argument proves quite too much. In the first place, it might once have been argued, quite as justly, that the first Advent of our Lord must end all chance for salvation; for, if any were to be saved after Messiah's coming, that would imply that the Old Testament must go over; whereas much of the Old Testament—as the whole sacrificial ritual, and all laws and exhortations based upon it,—would be of no pertinence after the anti-type had come. But the event has shown what sorry reasoning that would have been. Why is it any better in the present case?

To this obvious objection to his argument, Dr. Brown only has to say that the two cases of the Old and New Testament, the first and the second comings, are not parallel; because when Christ comes the second time, He will come to judge and to destroy. Certainly He will. But the answer assumes the whole question under debate, which is—not whether Christ will come to judge and destroy—but whether the predicted judgment and destruction will be of such a nature, and occur in

such a space of time, and in such an order, as will make it impossible that a remnant of the nations shall turn to God after the Lord's appearing, and before the final *consummation* of His judgment work. Whether this be true or not, it is clear that the assertion of a point in debate cannot be taken as an argument against it. As regards this statement, we freely admit that when Christ comes, He will come to judge and destroy; but we also read that He will come to reign in righteousness and in peace. Nor is there the slightest difficulty in seeing how these can both be true, if we but remember the principle of "prophetic perspective" —a principle which Dr. Brown ignores from one end of his book to the other, but which, had he applied it, would have kept him from writing much of his book. We may add, regarding this proposition, that it would not be hard to show that Dr. Brown's argument, applied to the future, might also prove that none could be saved in the Millennium which he and others expect, this side of the Advent. For, undeniably, a large part of the New Testament is occupied with exhortations and instructions, which would have no more pertinence in the Millennium which he expects, this side of the Advent, than others concerning the Second coming in the Millennium which Premillennialists expect. Of what force warning against persecutions when, as he assures us, all shall be in name and profession, if not in reality, righteous? What

truth in the words, that "the whole world lieth in wickedness," in a time when, Dr. Brown tells us, the true religion shall universally prevail? Why then, we repeat, does it not follow that, on Dr. Brown's own principles, none could be saved in the Millennium which he expects, any more than in that which Premillennialists expect? In one case, just as much as in the other, much of the Scripture would be inapplicable.

III. Dr. Brown's next argument against the Premillennialist position is to this effect: "The sacraments will come to an end when Christ comes; therefore there can be none saved after the Advent." An astonishing argument this, to hear from a Protestant! Granting that the sacraments will both surely cease—which itself needs proof—yet to infer that, therefore, there can be no more salvation, is an argument which could only be valid to a Romanist. But Dr. Brown is not the first to argue in this fashion. Just so some of the ancient Jewish Christians thought, at first, that circumcision and the passover must needs go over into the Christian dispensation, or there could be no salvation. But it was a well-nigh fatal mistake, and the Epistle to the Galatians was written to correct it.

Dr. Brown's answer to this anticipated reply is, if possible, more extraordinary than his original argument. He tells us that the cases of the Jewish and the Christian sacraments are not parallel; that

in the case of the latter, unlike the former, the end, salvation, and the means, the sacraments, are "indissolubly bound together," so that if one cease, the other must! To which we reply, if these words mean what they say, they are in direct contradiction to the Word of God and to the creed of every Protestant Church in Christendom. All Protestants agree that salvation is *not* indissolubly tied to the sacraments. But if Dr. Brown does not mean what he seems to say, then his argument is null and void. For if salvation be not "indissolubly" tied to the sacraments, then, even though they come to an end with the appearing of the Lord, this would not give the slightest reason to conclude that therefore there could be salvation no longer. Not with arguments like this is the Premillennialist argument from Scripture to be set aside.

IV. The next head of Dr. Brown's argument is based on the following proposition: "The intercession of Christ and the work of the Spirit for saving purposes will cease at the second Advent." If this be so, then it is certain that there can be no dispensation of grace succeeding to the present, and the conversion of the world must be before the second Advent.

But where are the Scriptures which assert that the intercession of Christ and the saving work of the Spirit must cease when Christ returns to earth? Dr. Brown brings up the following texts in an-

swer: Hebrews 9: 12: "Christ entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." Assuredly; but who disputes this? Here is not a word about the second Advent or about the duration of Christ's intercession. Surely there is no reason in the nature of the case why the application of Christ's atoning sacrifice through His high priestly intercession should be conditioned by His absence from the earth. The virtue of the atonement can never be exhausted; a limit to its efficacy can only be fixed by the sovereign will of God. Looking at the facts to learn, if we may, the manner of God's dealing with men hitherto, we find that they afford not the least ground for Dr. Brown's assumption that the salvation of sinners is *necessarily* conditioned by the actual presence of Christ as High Priest within the veil. Men were saved before Christ ever came into the world; Christ interceded and men were saved thereby when He was on the earth. There is, therefore, no such *necessary* connection between the actual *continued* presence of Christ in heaven and the salvation of men as, independently of direct statements to the contrary, should compel us to believe that the salvation of men must cease when Christ comes forth from the veil in the end of the age.

But Dr. Brown argues the same conclusion further from the closing words of the same chapter, especially these: "As it is appointed unto men

once to die, but after that the judgment; so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."[1] He says that these words represent the second Advent, "as crowning the whole purpose of the first"; that is, they teach us that all for which Christ died will be attained when He appears the second time.[2] But how the words justify this inference he fails to show. It certainly is not here asserted; neither is there any implication one way or the other in the passage. The words only teach that the second Advent will crown the whole purpose of the first, *as regards all those "who look for Him"*—that is, who believe on Him before that Advent. But by what logic it can be shown to follow from this that Christ could have had no further purpose in His death, is beyond our power to comprehend!

Still more irrelevant, if possible, is the only remaining text which is cited in proof of this momentous proposition: "Wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing that he ever liveth to make intercession for them."[3] But what is there in these words to teach that the intercession of the *ever*-living Priest must come to an immediate end with His appearing? They would much more readily suggest that, as He *ever* liveth to make intercession, therefore His intercession must be ever-

[1] Heb. 9:27, 28. [2] See, *e. g.*, John 17. [3] Heb. 7:25.

lasting, as, indeed, many, with much more reason, have hence argued. Certainly there is not a syllable here to suggest that the intercession of Christ must end with His second coming. And these are all the proof texts adduced for the dogmatic assertion of his fourth proposition.

V. The next argument against the truth of Christ's Premillennial Advent is of the following purport: Christ's proper kingdom is already in being, commencing formally on His ascension to the right hand of God, and continuing unchanged both in character and form till the final judgment. The passage upon which he chiefly relied for the proof of this assertion is found in Acts 2: 29–36, where we read that Peter, preaching to the Jews, used the following language: "Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David. . . . Being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins he would *raise up Christ to sit on his* (David's) *throne;* he, seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ. . . . This *Jesus hath God raised up,* whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore BEING by the right hand of God EXALTED, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this. . . . THEREFORE, *let all the house of Israel know assuredly,* that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified, both LORD

and CHRIST."[1] Of these words Dr. Brown remarks: "That Christ is now on David's throne is as clearly affirmed by Peter in this sermon as words could do it." It forbids, therefore, he concludes, to place in the future the predicted session on the throne of David; which, indeed, in a figurative way, denotes the same thing as that sitting on the right hand of God, which began long ago, immediately upon Christ's ascension into heaven.

For, he argues, with many, the passage before us represents our Lord as sitting on the throne of David from the time that God raised Him up from the dead; hence His reign on the throne of David must have begun long ago, in heaven and not on earth, and is therefore to be identified with that enthronement of our Lord as Mediatorial King at God's right hand, of which we read in verse 36.

Thus the conclusion follows, according to Dr. Brown and those who agree with him, that when Premillennialists represent the assumption of the Davidic throne as referring to a still future assumption of dominion on this earth, they come directly into conflict with the teaching of this passage, which represents Christ as seated on the throne of David ever since His resurrection.

We reply that, however plausible the reasoning may at first sight appear, by which it is sought to

[1] We give the passage as condensed by Dr. Brown. The italics and capitals, also, are his.

establish this conclusion, the passage really teaches no such thing. Dr. Brown builds up his argument on two assumptions. He assumes, first, that the phrase "raise up" (verse 30) refers to the resurrection of Christ; and, in the second place, that the session on the throne of David must have *immediately* followed the resurrection. Hence, as thus Christ long ago began to sit on David's throne, "David's" throne must mean the heavenly throne which Christ now occupies at God's right hand as Mediator, and a personal reign on earth cannot be expected hereafter.

In reply to this argument, it is to be observed, first, that according to the revised text of the New Testament, the word *anastesein,* rendered "raise up," is to be omitted as spurious. This decision of the revisers being granted, of course Dr. Brown's argument, as based upon that word, goes with it. In the second place, if we reject the judgment of the revisers, and retain the words "raise up," the case is no better for his argument. For, according to usage, this word *anastesein,* when standing by itself, as here, does not denote a raising from the dead. In all such cases it means "to raise up in history," "to bring into being and power," as when God is said to have raised up for His own purposes, Pharaoh, Moses or Cyrus. If usage, then, is to settle the case, this only is the sense in which God, in this verse, is said to raise up Christ. Hence, again, as there is no allusion

to Christ's resurrection in the verse, it cannot prove that the session upon David's throne began at that time.

But lastly, if we disregard usage, and grant Dr. Brown that in this place this word *anastesein* by itself, exceptionally denotes a raising from the dead, even yet these words would not prove that Christ began to sit on David's throne immediately upon His resurrection. On that assumption the text would only teach that the session upon David's throne followed the rising from the dead, but it could not give a hint as to how soon after that resurrection it began, or that it had yet begun at all. To illustrate,—if I say that a certain prince came into such and such a land to sit upon its throne, and it should afterward appear that in fact he did not ascend the throne until he had been some years in the country, would that prove my statement incorrect? We must again insist upon the manifest fact that the prophets almost invariably speak of related events, without indicating any interval of time, whether great or small, which may elapse between them. A statement, therefore, if made here or elsewhere, that God raised Christ from the dead to sit on David's throne, cannot possibly prove anything as to how soon after that resurrection His session on that throne began. Hence, though we grant Dr. Brown all the doubtful points which he assumes as certain, there is still no evidence in this passage that

Christ's session on the throne of David must be identified with that sitting upon God's right hand as Mediator, which confessedly began long ago.[1] Like all that has preceded, this argument, when examined, falls unsupported to the ground. There is but one other text which Dr. Brown adduces in proof that there can be no future reign of Christ upon the earth in a converted world, such as Premillennialists expect. It is found in Revelation 3: 7, wherein Christ styles Himself, "he that hath the key of David." But how can these words, which contain not a hint as to time—the vital question in debate—touch the question whether Christ is *now* on David's throne? They certainly imply that Christ is acknowledged by God as the rightful heir and successor of David; but, surely, to have the key of a house is one thing, to be actually living in it is another. The former cannot be held to prove the latter. Nothing then in either of the passages brought up by Dr. Brown yields the slightest evidence in support of his assertion, that there can be no new manifestation of Christ's glory as Mediatorial King before the consummation of redemption. If proof of that is to be had, it must certainly be sought elsewhere.

[1] Revelation 3: 21, we think, conclusively points forward to a future throne for Christ which He promises to share with those who overcome, and which is explicitly mentioned in distinction from that throne on which He is now glorified.—H. S. N.

VI. Dr. Brown's sixth proposition is as follows:

"When Christ comes, the whole Church will be made alive at once;" therefore—as before—there can be none saved after His return.

But this is not a new argument. It is the first proposition as to the completeness of the Church at the Advent, stated in different language. He adds, however, under this head, one other objection to Premillennialism, as follows. If men are saved after the Advent, then there must be a resurrection after the Advent. But the Scriptures never represent a resurrection as occurring except in connection with the *parousia* of the Lord. Hence, there can be no further resurrection or translation after the Advent, except there be still two Advents of the Lord in the future.

To this we answer, in the first place, that even if the event should prove that the prophecies concerning what the Lord shall do at a future Advent, should have a reference to two Advents, this would only be quite after the analogy of Old Testament predictions. These refer to the first and second Advents of our Lord in such wise that until He left the earth it never occurred to any one to imagine that these predictions had reference to two distinct and very different comings. He would be a bold man who should venture to say that this *could not* prove to be the case with the Advent prophecies which still await fulfilment.

But the Premillennialist is not obliged, in order to meet this objection, to assume either a resurrection after the *parousia* or a twofold *parousia.* For, as remarked before, the whole force of Dr. Brown's argument lies in the assumption that the New Testament phrase, *en te parousia autou,* rendered "at His coming," can only denote a moment or a very brief period of time. But it has been already shown that the phrase warrants no such assumption. Grant that the word *parousia* covers as much time in this case as we know that it covers in others, and this objection has no force. For even though men should be saved after the glorious Epiphany, and though these should also in due time be raised or translated, yet all this could still be during Christ's *parousia.*

This same principle furnishes the answers to each of Dr. Brown's remaining propositions and arguments, which we, therefore, enumerate together. They are as follows:

VII. "All the wicked will be made alive at the coming of Christ;" but the Premillennialist teaches that they will not be made alive till more than a thousand years after the coming.

VIII. The Scriptures teach "that the righteous and the wicked will be judged together at the coming of Christ." The Premillennialist teaches that they shall not be judged together, but that the judgment of the wicked shall take place more than a thousand years after the coming of Christ.

IX. Finally, according to the Word of God, the heavens and the earth, which now are, being dissolved by fire, shall give place to new heavens and a new earth, "at the coming of Christ." If the Premillennialist place this dissolving fire at the beginning of the millennial period, then he has to show how the nations are to be carried safely through it. If, to escape this difficulty, he assume that this destroying fire does not take place till after the thousand years' reign, then he makes it to take place a thousand years after the coming, while the Bible declares it shall take place at the coming of the Lord.

To all these objections the answer is the same as to all others based upon the phrases, "at His coming," "the day of the Lord," "the last day," etc. It has already been abundantly shown that not one of these phrases *must* be taken as denoting a definite point or a brief duration of time. It has been shown from the usage of Scripture that each of these may as easily denote a period of very *long* duration. But if this be so, then neither of these propositions has the slightest force as an argument against the doctrine of a Premillennial Advent. It is certain that the Lord teaches explicitly that all the wicked will be destroyed in the day of His coming; also that the righteous and the wicked will both be raised from the dead and judged in the day of His *parousia*. But if that *parousia* extend over a prolonged period, then it is

clear that all this might be strictly true, and yet all the wicked not be destroyed simultaneously with, nor the judgment work of Christ be all completed immediately upon, His glorious appearing.

So also as to the fiery destruction of the present earth. The Scriptures certainly tell us that it shall take place "in the day of the Lord." But what right has any one to *assume,* without proof, that that phrase denotes a brief period, and then go on to raise difficulties and make objections, all of which vanish if it denotes a long period? For, if "the day of the Lord" be nearly as long as many other days of which we read in the Scriptures, then it is clear that we do not need to assume that the burning of the earth of which Peter speaks shall take place *immediately* upon the Lord's appearing. Thus we shall not need to trouble ourselves as to how men shall be carried safely through those destroying fires, even though in any case we might suggest that the God of Noah would be found quite able to solve the problem were it needful. That fiery judgment, we are told, will be "in the day of the Lord." But we are reminded by the apostle in *the immediately preceding context,* of what Dr. Brown never seems to have thought, that "one day is with the Lord as a thousand years," so that we are not to reckon the days of the Lord as the days of men. Thus, whether the final conflagration which is to be followed by "the new heavens and the new earth,"

take place at the beginning or the end of the Millennial age, in the morning or the evening of that great dispensational period, it will be, in either case, literally true that it will take place in "the day of the Lord."

Such then are the arguments and such the use of Scripture by which Dr. Brown is supposed by many to have shown *conclusively* the utter fallacy of the argument above given for the doctrine of a Premillennial Advent. Whether his arguments are sufficient, as many have supposed, to nullify all the arguments above adduced, and others for the truth of that doctrine, the reader must judge for himself.

Before closing this discussion we may advert to two or three other arguments which are often brought up against the truth of our belief. Thus, it is often charged, "that whereas the Scriptures teach that the return of Christ will introduce the day of judgment," Premillennialists teach that it will not, but that Christ will come more than a thousand years before the judgment.

We answer that it is clear from Scripture that the day of judgment will begin immediately upon the appearing of the Lord; but we repeat that we can find nothing in Scripture which should lead us to believe that the period which is called "the day of judgment" may not cover a term of years quite comparable with the great dispensational periods which the world has already seen.

Furthermore, if it then be urged—as it often is—that the Premillennialist makes that great day of the Lord to be occupied with all the administrations of a theocratic reign, and not with judgment, we ask again for the Scripture warrant for restricting the content of this term, "judge," as applied to the work on which Christ shall enter at His second coming, to the mere distribution of rewards and punishments. If any one will examine the Scripture usage of this term, as we find it in the Old Testament, and especially in the Messianic prophecies—from which Jesus and the apostles took the word—he will see at once that however momentous these *judicial* aspects of that day may be to us and to the world, they cannot, according to the Scripture use of terms, be held to exhaust all that the Scriptures comprehend in the prediction of a *judgment* of the world by Christ.[1]

[1] See, in illustration, Jud. 10:2; 12:7; 1 Sam. 4:18; 1 Kings 3:9; Ps. 98:9 (cf. Acts 17:31, which refers the passage, and hence the Psalm, to the second Advent); also, Ps. 96:10, where "judge" is explained by "reign," and 67:4, where it is explained by "govern."

VII

PREMILLENNIALISM AND MISSIONS

It is Frequently Said to Discourage Efforts at World-Evangelization—The Facts Show the Opposite to be the Case—It Actually Inspires Greater Zeal in Missionary Endeavour—The Overestimated Majority of Scholars.

WE are often told that the practical effect of Premillennialism is bad; that it tends to discourage all missionary effort.[1] But the objection holds good neither in logic nor in fact. Indifference to missionary work is not the *logical* consequence of a belief in the Advent of the Lord, as premillennial. In the first place, because the conversion of the world, even with those who expect this to be brought about by the present preaching of the Gospel, is in no case the only or the highest and most effectual motive to evangelistic effort. Far higher than the expectation of a given numerical result, is the love of Christ, constraining obedience to His last command. May not a Premillennialist feel the full force of that? Again, the Premillennialist believes, no less than those who differ with him, that the Gospel must be published among all nations before the kingdom

[1] So Dr. Brown, for example: "Is not this to paralyze effort?" *The Second Advent*, p. 322.

will come. Nor does he miss, as is often falsely charged, the inspiration given by the hope of seeing many saved. On the contrary, we believe that God is visiting the Gentiles, not merely for an unfruitful witness, but "to take out of them a people"; that Scripture, as also experience, teaches that mighty outpourings of the Holy Spirit are included in God's plan for the present dispensation; and that, as the result of all this, however few relatively may be saved out of any given generation, the saved from the present age shall at last be found to be "a great multitude, which no man can number." But beside all these motives, common to all of us alike, Premillennialism furnishes others of great power *peculiar* to that doctrine. It makes the appearance of the glorious kingdom a practical possibility of the near future, as the contrary doctrine cannot. For to convert the world in our own time is not in man; but to witness to all nations *is* in the power of the Church, *even in this generation.* We believe that, if but that be done, the Lord will come, and with Him the great victory of the ages, the first resurrection and the everlasting kingdom. We believe this, because we find it plainly declared by our Lord Himself, that when "this Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached for a witness to all nations, then shall the end come." Is this belief and expectation disheartening,—that the end of this present evil sinful order may thus by our labour be brought so very soon?

Finally, the sincere belief in the possible imminence of the Advent, which allows of no interposition of a millennium before that event, so far from hindering men from the mission field, is a mighty quickener to the conscience in deciding on a field of labour. Will a man argue, "The Lord may be near, therefore I will neglect His great commission"? So much for the logical issue of the doctrine. If other motives have power alone, how much the more with these superadded?

And the objection has as little foundation in facts as in logic. The facts are exactly the reverse of what objectors tell us we should expect. On their own principle, they furnish an argument in favour of the doctrine, and not against it. No age, probably, has seen greater missionary activity than the second century of our era; but that, by universal admission, was just the age when the doctrine of the Premillennial Advent was held more extensively than at any subsequent period. And the revival of the faith and hope of the primitive Church is producing similar effects in our own day. Not for a moment would we seem to depreciate the missionary zeal and devotion of many workers at home and abroad, missionaries and martyrs among them, who have not been able to see this doctrine in the Scriptures. But the fact remains that Premillennialists, in proportion to their comparatively small number, are found much more numerous among our foreign missionaries than among the ministry at home. It may be

added, with reference to an often-repeated charge, that none can be found who are labouring more joyously and hopefully than they.

Illustrations are numerous. In the North India Missions of the Presbyterian Church the majority are Premillenarians (1885). A few years ago, to our personal knowledge, they numbered two-thirds of the mission force. So also, the missionaries of the East London Institute, in Africa, on the banks of the Congo—recently transferred to the care of the Baptist Missionary Union of this country—are, we understand, generally Premillenarians. A year or two ago the record of that same East London Training Institute showed that under strictly Premillennial teaching, one hundred foreign missionaries had been sent out within six years! Is there a seminary under influence of the opposite doctrine that shows a record like this? The largest mission in China is the China Inland Mission. At the beginning of 1884 it numbered one hundred and twenty-six foreign labourers. In June, 1884, Mr. Taylor, the founder of the Mission, returned to England for recruits. Although, unlike our own great Missionary Societies and Boards, this Society guarantees no income at all to its labourers, Mr. Taylor obtained for his mission forty-nine new labourers in three days—a reinforcement which has since, within seven months, been increased to one hundred. But all these, it is said, "with scarcely a single exception, are believers in the personal Premillennial Advent of Christ." The

munificent gifts of Mr. Arthington, of Leeds, England, for the establishment of new missions in foreign lands, are matter of thankful and joyful comment in all the churches. But he, again, is an enthusiastic believer in the Premillennial Advent of our Lord, and recognizes that hope, to our personal knowledge, as, in his experience, one of the mightiest motives to the consecration of his fortune to the advancement of the foreign mission work.

[This objection, that Premillennialists discourage world evangelization by their doctrine that the world will not be converted till Christ comes, is not so confidently made now as formerly, because it is seen to be not supported by facts. Since, however, one occasionally still hears it, it may be well to supplement the author's earlier citations by some present-day corroborations.

1. Many Missionary Training Schools were founded by Premillennialists and teach this doctrine, *e. g.*

The Christian and Missionary Alliance Institute, at Nyack, N. Y. This society has at present 414 missionaries abroad, and yearly spends about half a million dollars in world-wide evangelization. It was founded by Dr. A. B. Simpson about the time Dr. Kellogg penned these pages.

The Moody Bible Institute of Chicago, founded in 1889, has trained over 1,100 foreign missionaries.

The Los Angeles Bible Institute founded only ten years ago, through the beneficence of some Premillennialist laymen, has trained 161 missionaries now on the field and has at present a volunteer band of 132.

The Northwestern Bible Institute in a few years has trained twenty-two foreign missionaries and has now thirty-five volunteers.

The school founded by Dr. A. J. Gordon in Boston about the time this book was written was both a Premillennial School and a missionary training school, sending parties of missionaries yearly to various fields.

2. Not a few missionary societies were started and car-

ried on by Premillennialists. The China Inland Mission above referred to has now nearly 1,100 missionaries on its roll, is one of the largest missionary bodies in the world, and if we mistake not, has the largest number of missionaries in one land, of any society.

The African Inland Mission has over 180 missionaries, The Christian and Missionary Alliance, as above stated, 414, and the Sudan Interior Mission 69.

3. The proportion of Premillennialists still continues greater among foreign missionaries than among Christian workers at home. How can this be reconciled with the objection that they are not keen on world-evangelization? Dr. Kellogg elsewhere gives a bit of interesting information about the Seminary class in which he graduated. Among the fifty graduates were just seven Premillennialists. These all volunteered for the foreign field, while none of the others did. Four were permitted to go, and the three who were found physically unfit engaged in home mission work.

4. Like Mr. Arthington mentioned above, later examples of wealthy laymen might be mentioned who have devoted large sums to promote the evangelization of the world, believing that thereby they were hastening the Lord's return, *e. g.* The Stewart Evangelistic Fund of which various foreign missionary bodies have benefited is one well-known example.—H. S. N.]

So, also, Mr. Moody, Major Whittle, and the many other like-minded Christian laymen, who have done such a grand work in carrying the Gospel to the masses in our home lands, are—to a man, if we mistake not—Premillenarians. One of these, Mr. Moody, gave his experience of the power of this "blessed hope" in these words:—"I have felt like working three times as hard since I came to understand that my Lord was coming back again. I look on the world as a wrecked vessel. God has, as it were, given me a life-boat, and said to me, 'Moody, save all you can!'"

It is quite time, in view of the facts, that this common popular objection to the Premillennial doctrine,—that it is fatal to interest in missions,—should be dropped, as a baseless slander. It should rather be recognized that the mighty effect of a practical belief in the Premillennial Advent in increasing missionary zeal, furnishes one of the most impressive proofs which we have outside the Scriptures, that the doctrine is verily of God, and not of man.

With a large class of those who reject the doctrine, it is made an argument against its truth, that the great majority of the ministers and people in our churches do not believe in it. In reply to this, several things might be said. In the first place, the question, what is the truth of God, is not to be settled by a majority vote of church-members "in good and regular standing"; nor even by a vote of the ordained ministry of any Church. The appeal must lie to the Word of God alone. In the second place, the application of this test of the truth of a doctrine would, once and again in the history of the Church, have branded as falsehood and heresy what we all regard as vital and essential truth. If the church historians are to be believed, there was a time when the majority of the professing Church, at least of the bishops, both of the Eastern and Western Church, believed and taught the doctrine of Arius, which denied the true Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ. Yet the minority were in the right! Again, at the begin-

ning of the sixteenth century, the largest part both of the professed members of Christ's Church, and of her authorized ministers, denied the doctrine of justification by faith alone. The application of this principle, which some think ought to silence Premillenarians, would in those days have silenced Martin Luther and the Reformers. In the next place, it is easy to see why the doctrine of a personal Premillennial Advent should be unpopular with a large part of the Church. Not for a moment would we deny that many of those who differ from us are men whose earnestness and spirituality, and likeness in character to Christ, we might all well seek to imitate. We have no difficulty in understanding how many, with earnest desire for the knowledge of the truth, should be so perplexed by difficulties, as to feel that they cannot construct all the revealed facts of eschatology into a consistent system, satisfactory to their mind, on the assumption that Premillennialism is true. But, leaving this class out of our consideration, is it not clear that, to that sadly large part of professing Christendom, which is steeped in worldliness, to all denominationalism, sectarianism, and false ecclesiasticism, the doctrine of an Advent of the Lord to judgment, personal, Premillennial, and therefore *possibly near,* must be exceedingly distasteful? The worldly Christian does not like to think that it is possible that suddenly the light of Christ's judgment throne may be flashed down into his life. The zealous sectarian, again, who

has persuaded himself that in the acceptance of his particular Shibboleth, in the spread of his particular Church, is to be found one of the chief means in the conversion of the world and bringing in the kingdom of God, naturally can have little sympathy with a doctrine which insists that the subjection of the world to Christ is not the work committed to any Church in this present dispensation.

Finally, those who urge in favour of a Millennial age before the Advent, and against the Premillennial doctrine, the opinion of a too-much-revered majority, if we mistake not, in many cases immensely overrate the strength and significance of that majority. It is probably not too much to say that the great majority of those who are regarded by Protestant Christendom as the most learned, devout and evangelical expositors of the *prophetic* Word for the last three hundred years, if not believing in the personal reign of Christ, have at least utterly rejected that theory of the Socinian Whitby, so earnestly advocated by Dr. Brown, and so popular in our country, of a Millennial Age of righteousness before the Advent. A large part of the most competent interpreters of the prophetic Word are at least agreed in this, that churches and states are traveling,—not first to a Millennium of triumph in the flesh,—but straight to the judgment-seat of a returning Christ!

This modern doctrine of a conversion of the world before the Advent was rejected by all the

Reformers. The most of the chief divines of the Westminster Assembly are said by the historian of that Assembly to have been Premillenarians; while even of those who were not, we are not aware that one is upon record as endorsing the now common expectations of a converted world this side of the Advent.[1] Many illustrations could be given of these statements. Said Luther: "Some say that before the last day the whole world shall become Christian. This is a falsehood forged by Satan, that he might darken sound doctrine." And again: "I am persuaded that verily the day of judgment is not far off; yea, will not be absent 300 years longer. The voice will soon be heard, 'Behold, the bridegroom cometh.'" Said the martyred Bishop Latimer: "I believe that the Lord may come in my day, old as I am." Said that sturdy Presbyterian, John Knox: "The Lord Jesus shall come and that with expedition! What were this else but to reform the face of the whole earth, which never was *nor yet shall be until that righteous King and Judge appear* for the restitution of all things." In our day like testimonies might still more be multiplied from many of the ablest and most spiritual expounders of the

[1] Dr. Twisse, the Prolocutor of the Westminster Assembly, was a well-known millenarian. Robert Bailee, one of the members in writing to his friend Spang, admits that "*the most of the chief divines here, as Twisse, Marshall, Palmer and many more are express Chiliasts.*" The one who wrote this report of the Assembly's divines was himself an antimillenarian, as postmillennialists were then called.—H. S. N.

Word. Said Krummacher: "The Lord cometh! Never did the Church witness such a constellation of signs of the near Advent of Christ as now." Van Oosterzee, late Professor of Theology in the University of Utrecht, writes: "One gladdening prelude of the coming of the Lord is certainly the general proclamation of the Gospel of the kingdom to all nations. But this takes place for a witness unto them; by no means with the result that all are saved. On the contrary, the hostility to the truth will never rise higher than just when it is on the brink of forever being vanquished. An advancing tide of seduction and increasing apostasy is to be looked for." So again writes Luthardt, Professor of Theology in the University of Leipzig: "Men would yield themselves to a vain hope and would fancy that Christianity shall ever become more and more the power of the thought and life of men, and Christianity may indeed yet become the religion of the world, and even the most remote barbarians gather themselves into the bounds of the Church. But the future toward which we are traveling is the complete inner estrangement of the masses from Christian faith and at last their open apostasy." In our own land, that eminent theologian, the Rev. Dr. Robert J. Breckinridge, late Professor of Theology in the Danville (Presb.) Theological Seminary, has written thus: "Whoever will assert that the Church of God, independently of some divine change in the elements of the problem it has been working out, under its Gospel

form, for more than eighteen centuries, can have a future very materially different from her past history, or that the human race can have a spiritual future essentially variant from that which is past, without some further and marvelous interposition of God, will in each instance, as it appears to me, contradict the whole current of divine revelation, and disregard the absolute economy of the plan of salvation. The augmentation of the present saving operation of the Divine Spirit is not that supernatural change in the elements of the problem, is not that further interposition of God, which will extinguish sin and misery of this world, and give to the Saints their Millennial glory and reign with Christ. *It is the Second Coming of the Son of Man* which is that change in the elements of the problem, that further interposition of God which will give the victory." [1]

Not to multiply testimonies, it will be enough to add to the names of these eminent divines in our own and recent times who have believed and taught the Premillennialist doctrine, such as the following:—Bishops Horsley, Newton, and Heber, Charles Wesley, Aug. Toplady, Bengel, Delitzsch, Von Hofmann, Auberlen, Ebrard, Lange, Christlieb, Gaussen, the brothers Andrew and Horatius Bonar, Bishop Ellicott, Dean Alford, Bishop Ryle, not to speak of many others.

With such names and facts before us, it should be plain that the argument against Premillennial-

[1] *Knowledge of God, Subjectively Considered*, p. 677.

ism from the voice of a heterogeneous majority in our own time, and especially our own land, deserves to have no decisive weight. In any case it is not too much to say that, in view of the facts, for an intelligent Christian to treat the Premillennial doctrine with contempt, and regard a belief in it as indicating a lack of sound and sober judgment; still more, to seek to charge that belief with inevitable tendencies to fanaticism, confounding Millenarianism with Millerism and like extravagancies, after the fashion of many, is only to evince a degree of ignorance or intensity of prejudice which does little credit to the head or heart of him who makes such imputations. One thing, at least, is certain: We are all bound, whether private Christians or ministers, to conform our thinking and teaching to the model given by our Lord and His apostles. But if we do this, we shall never be able to feel as if the Church were sure of centuries of peace and righteousness before the Lord's return. We shall all do well to remember how the apostle Paul warned Timothy that the last days should be "perilous times," with much of the form of Godliness, joined with denial of its power, and then solemnly added the too oft-forgotten words: "*If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ.*"

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